

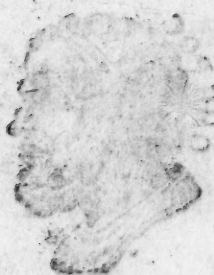
THE  
WORKS  
OF  
ALEXANDER POPE, ESQ.  
VOLUME III.  
CONTAINING HIS  
MORAL ESSAYS.



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BERLIN,  
Printed for FREDRICK NICOLAI Bookfeller.  
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THE  
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ALEXANDER ROBEY, ESQ.  
VOLUME III  
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MORAL ESSAYS.



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Printed for FREDERICK NICHOLAI Bookbinder  
No. 24, St. Paul's Church-yard, London.



AN  
E S S A Y  
ON  
S A T I R E,

Occasioned by the Death

OF

MR. POPE.

Inscribed to

MR. WARBURTON.

By

J. BROWN, A. M.

VOL. III.

A



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## PART I.

FATE gave the word; the cruel arrow sped;  
And POPE lies number'd with the mighty Dead!  
Resign'd he fell; superior to the darr,  
That quench'd its rage in YOURS and BRITAIN'S Heart:  
You mourn: but BRITAIN, lull'd in rest profound,  
(Unconscious Britain!) slumbers o'er her wound.  
Exulting Dulness ey'd the setting Light,  
And flapp'd her wing, impatient for the Night:  
Rous'd at the signal, Guilt collects her train,  
And counts the Triumphs of her growing Reign:  
With inextinguishable rage they burn; 11  
And Snake-hung ENVY hisses o'er his Urn:  
Th' envenom'd Monsters spit their deadly foam,  
To blast the Laurel that surrounds his Tomb.

But YOU, o WARBURTON! whose eye refin'd  
Can see the greatness of an honest mind;  
Can see each Virtue and each Grace unite,  
And taste the Raptures of a *pure* Delight;  
You visit oft his awful Page with Care,  
And view that bright Assemblage treasur'd there;  
You trace the Chain that links his deep design,  
And pour new Lustre on the glowing Line,  
Yet deign to hear the efforts of a Muse,  
Whose eye, not wing, his ardent flight pursues:  
Intent from this great Archetype to draw 25  
SATIRE's bright Form, and fix her equal Law;  
Pleas'd if from hence th' unlearn'd may comprehend,  
And reverence HIS and SATIRE's gen'rous End.



VI      ESSAY ON SATIRE.      Part I.

IN ev'ry Breast there burns an active flame,  
 The Love of Glory, or the Dread of Shame:      30  
 The Passion ONE, tho' various it appear,  
 As brighten'd into Hope, or dimm'd by Fear.  
 The lisping Infant, and the hoary Sire,  
 And Youth and Manhood feel the heart-born fire:  
 The Charms of Praise the Coy, the Modest wooe,  
 And only fly, that Glory may pursue:      36  
 Sh., Pow'r resistless, rules the wise and great;  
 Bends ev'n reluctant Hermits at her feet;  
 Haunts the proud City; and the lowly Shade,  
 And sways alike the Sceptre and the Spade.      40

Thus Heav'n in Pity wakes the friendly Flame,  
 To urge Mankind on Deeds that merit Fame:  
 But Man, vain Man, in folly only wise,  
 Rejects the Manna sent him from the Skies:  
 With rapture hears corrupted Passion's call,      45  
 Still proudly prone to mingle with the stall.  
 As each deceitful shadow tempts his view,  
 He for the *imag'd* Substance quits the *true*;  
 Eager to catch the visionary Prize,  
 In quest of Glory plunges deep in Vice;      50  
 'Till madly zealous, impotently vain,  
 He forfeits ev'ry Praise he pants to gain.

Thus still imperious NATURE plies her part;  
 And, still her Dictates work in ev'ry heart.  
 Each Pow'r that sov'reign Nature bids enjoy,      55  
 Man may corrupt, but Man can ne'er destroy.  
 Like mighty rivers, with resistless force  
 The Passions rage, obstructed in their course;  
 Swell to new heights, forbidden paths explore,  
 And drown those Virtues which they fed before.

Part I. ESSAY ON SATIRE. VII

And sure, the deadliest Foe to Virtue's flame,  
 Our worst of Evils, is *perverted Shame*.  
 Beneath this load what abject numbers groan,  
 Th' entangled Slaves to folly not their own!  
 Meanly by fashionable fear oppress'd. 65  
 We seek our Virtues in each other's breast;  
 Blind to ourselves, adopt each foreign Vice,  
 Another's weakness, int'rest, or caprice.  
 Each Fool to low Ambition, poorly great,  
 That pines in splendid wretchedness of state, 70  
 Tir'd in the treach'rous Chase, would nobly yield,  
 And, but for Shame, like SYLLA, quit the field:  
 The Dæmon *Shame* paints strong the ridicule,  
 And whispers close, "*the World will call you Fool.*"

Behold yon Wretch, by impious fashion driv'n,  
 Believes and trembles while he scoffs at Heav'n.  
 By weakness strong, and bold thro' fear alone,  
 He dreads the sneer by shallow Coxcombs thrown;  
 Dauntless pursues the path *Spinoza* trod;  
 To Man a Coward, and a Brave to God. 80

Faith, Justice, Heav'n itself now quit their hold,  
 When to false Fame the captiv'd heart is sold:  
 Hence, blind to truth, relentless *Cato* dy'd;  
 Nought could subdue his Virtue, but his Pride.

IMITATIONS.

VER. 80. *To Man a Coward, etc.*

Vois tu ce Libertin en public intrepide,  
 Qui preche contre un Dieu que dans son Ame il croit?  
 Il iroit embrasser la Verité, qu'il voit;  
 Mais de ses faux Amis il craint la Raillerie,  
 Et ne brave ainsi Dieu que par Poltronnerie.

*Boileau; Ep. iii.*

Hence chaste *Lucretia's* Innocence betray'd 85  
 Fell by that Honour which was meant its aid,  
 Thus Virtue sinks beneath unnumber'd woes,  
 When Passions, born her friends, revolt her foes.

Hence SATIRE'S pow'r: 'Tis her corrective part,  
 To calm the wild disorders of the heart. 90

She points the arduous height where Glory lies,  
 And reaches mad Ambition to be wise:  
 In the dark bosom wakes the fair desire,  
 Draws good from ill, a brighter flame from fire;  
 Strips black Oppression of her gay disguise, 95  
 And bids the Hag in native horror rise;

Strikes tow'ring Pride and lawless Rapine dead,  
 And plants the wreath on Virtue's awful head.

Nor boasts the Muse a vain imagin'd Pow'r,  
 Tho' oft she mourn those ills she cannot cure. 100  
 The Worthy court her, and the Worthless fear;  
 Who shun her piercing eye, that eye revere.  
 Her awful voice the Vain and Vile obey,  
 And ev'ry foe to Wisdom feels her sway. 104

Smarts, Pedants, as she smiles, no more are vain;  
 Desponding Fops resign the clouded cane:  
 Hush'd at her voice, pert Folly's self is still,  
 And Dulness wonders while she drops her quill.  
 Like the arm'd BEE, with art most subtly true,  
 From poys'nous Vice she draws a healing dew:  
 Weak are the ties that civil arts can find, 111

#### IMITATIONS.

VER. 110. *From poys'nous Vice, etc.* Alluding to these Lines  
 of Mr. Pope;

In the nice Bee what Art so subtly true  
 From poys'nous Herbs extracts a healing Dew?

To quell the ferment of the tainted mind:  
 Cunning evades, securely wrapt in wiles;  
 And Force strong-sinew'd rends th' unequal toils:  
 The stream of Vice impetuous drives along, 115  
 Too deep for Policy, for Pow'r too strong.  
 Ev'n fair Religion, Native of the skies,  
 Scorn'd by the Crowd, seeks refuge with the Wife;  
 The Crowd with laughter spurns her awful train,  
 And Mercy courts, and Justice frowns in vain. 120  
 But SATIRE's shaft can pierce the harden'd breast:  
 She plays a *ruling Passion* on the rest:  
 Undaunted storms the batt'ry of his pride,  
 And awes the *Brave* that Earth and Heav'n defy'd.  
 When fell Corruption, by her vassals crown'd, 125  
 Derides fall'n Justice prostrate on the ground;  
 Swift to redress an injur'd People's groan.  
 Bold SATIRE shakes the Tyrant on her throne;  
 Pow'rful as Death, defies the sordid train,  
 And Slaves and Sycophants surround in vain. 130

But with the friends of Vice, the foes of SATIRE,  
 All truth is Spleen; all just reproof, Ill-nature.

Well may they dread the Muse's fatal skill;  
 Well may they tremble when she draws her quill:  
 Her magic quill, that, like ITHURIEL's spear, 135  
 Reveals the cloven hoof, or lengthen'd ear:  
 Bids Vice and Folly take their nat'ral shapes,  
 Turns Duchesses to strumpets, Beaux to apes;  
 Drags the vile Whisp'rer from his dark abode,  
 Till all the Dæmon starts up from the toad. 140

O sordid maxim, form'd to skreen the vile,  
 That true good-nature still must wear a smile!  
 In frowns array'd her beauties stronger rise,



x      **ESSAY ON SATIRE. Part I.**

When love of Virtue wakes her scorn of Vice:  
 Where Justice calls, 'tis Cruelty to save;      145  
 And 'tis the Law's good-nature hangs the Knave.  
 Who combats Virtue's foe is Virtue's friend;  
 Then judge of SATIRE's merit by her end:  
 To Guilt alone her vengeance stands confin'd,  
 The object of her love is all Mankind.      150  
 Scarce more the friend of Man, the wise must own,  
 Ev'n ALLEN's bounteous hand, than SATIRE's frown:  
 This to chastise, as That to bless, was giv'n;  
 Alike the faithful Ministers of Heav'n.  
 Oft in unfeeling hearts the shaft is spent:      155  
 Tho' strong th' example, weak the punishment.  
 They least are paid, who merit satire most;  
 Folly the *Laureat's*, Vice was *Chartres'* boast:  
 Then where's the wrong, to gibbet high the name  
 Of Fools and Knaves already dead to shame?      160  
 Oft SATIRE acts the faithful Surgeon's part;  
 Gen'rous and kind tho' painful is her art:  
 With caution bold, she only strikes to heal;  
 Tho' folly raves to break the friendly steel.  
 Then sure no fault impartial SATIRE knows,      165  
 Kind ev'n in Vengeance, kind to Virtue's foes,  
 Whose is the crime, the scandal too be theirs;  
 The Knave and Fool are their own Libellers.

5. NO 59





## P A R T II.

**D**ARE nobly then: But conscious of your trust,  
As ever warm and bold be ever just: 170

Nor court applause in these degen'rate days:  
The Villain's censure is extorted praise.

But chief, be steady in a noble end,  
And shew Mankind that Truth has yet a friend.  
'Tis mean for empty praise of wit to write, 175

As Foplings grin to shew their teeth are white:

To brand a doubtful folly with a smile,

Or madly blaze unknown defects, is vile:

'Tis doubly vile, when, but to prove your art,  
You fix an arrow in a blameless heart. 180

O lost to honour's voice, O doom'd to shame,

Thou Fiend accurs'd, thou Murderer of Fame!

Fell Ravisher, from Innocence to tear

That name, than liberty, than life more dear!

Where shall thy baseness meet its just return, 185

Or what repay thy guilt, but endless scorn?

And know, immortal Truth shall mock thy toil:

Immortal Truth shall bid the shaft recoil;

With rage retorted, wing the deadly dart;

And empty all its poyson in thy heart. 190

With caution next, the dang'rous pow'r apply;

An eagle's talon asks an eagle's eye:

Let SATIRE then her proper object know,

And ere she strike, be sure she strike a foe.

Nor fondly deem the real fool confess, 195

Because blind *Ridicule* conceives a jest:

Before whose altar Virtue oft hath bled,  
 And oft a destin'd Victim shall be lead:  
 Lo, *Shaftsb'ry* rears her high on Reason's throne,  
 And loads the Slave with honours not her own:  
 Big-swoln with folly, as her smiles provoke, 201  
 Prophaneness spawns, pert Dunces nurse the joke!  
 Come, let us join a while this titt'ring crew,  
 And own the *Ideot Guide* for once is true;  
 Deride our weak forefather's musty rule, 205  
 Who *therefore* smil'd, *because* they saw a Fool;  
 Sublimier logic now adorns our isle,  
 We *therefore* see a Fool, *because* we smile.  
 Truth in her gloomy Cave why fondly seek?  
 Lo, gay she sits in Laughter's dimpled cheek:  
 Contemns each surly Academic foe, 211  
 And courts the spruce Freethinker and the Beau.  
*Dædalian* arguments but few can trace,  
 But all can read the language of grimace.  
 Hence mighty Ridicule's all-conqu'ring hand 215  
 Shall work *Herculean* wonders thro' the Land:  
 Bound in the magic of her cobweb chain,  
 You, mighty *WARBURTON*, shall rage in vain,  
 In vain the trackless maze of Truth you scan,  
 And lend th' informing Clue to erring Man: 220  
 No more shall Reason boast her pow'r divine,  
 Her Base eternal shook by Folly's mine!  
 Truth's sacred Fort th'exploded laugh shall win;  
 And Coxcombs vanquish *BERKLEY* by a grin.  
 But you, more sage, reject th' inverted rule, 225  
 That Truth is e'er explor'd by Ridicule:  
 On truth, on falsehood let her colours fall,  
 She, throws a dazzling glare alike on all;

Part II. ESSAY ON SATIRE. XIII

As the gay Prism but mocks the flatter'd eye,  
And gives to ev'ry object ev'ry dye. 230

Beware the mad Advent'rer: bold and blind  
She hoists her sail, and drives with ev'ry wind;  
Deaf as the Storm to sinking Virtue's groan,  
Nor heeds a Friend's destruction, or her own.

Let clear-ey'd Reason at the helm preside, 235  
Bear to the wind, or stem the furious tide;  
*Then* Mirth may urge, when Reason can explore,  
*This* point the way, *that* waft us glad to shore.

Tho' distant Times may rise in SATIRE's page,  
Yet chief 'tis Her's to draw the *present Age*: 240

With Wisdom's lustre, Folly's shade contrast,  
And judge the reigning Manners by the past:  
Bid *Britain's* Heroes (awful Shades!) arise,

And ancient Honour beam on modern Vice:  
Point back to minds ingenuous, actions fair, 245  
Till the Sons blush at what their Fathers were:

Ere yet 'twas beggary the great to trust;  
Ere yet 'twas quite a folly to be just;  
When *low-born* Sharpers only dar'd a lie,  
Or falsify'd the card, or cogg'd the Dye; 250

Ere Lewdness the stain'd garb of Honour wore,  
Or Chastity was carted for the Whore;  
Vice flutter'd, in the plumes of Freedom dress'd;  
Or public Spirit was the public jest.

Be ever, in a just expression, bold,  
Yet ne'er degrade fair SATIRE to a Scold:  
Let no unworthy mien her form debase,  
But let her smile, and let her frown with grace:  
In mirth be temp'rate, temp'rate in her spleen;  
Nor, while she preaches modesty, obscene. 260

Deep let her wound, not rankle to a sore,  
Nor call his Lordship —, her Grace a — :  
The Muse's charms resistless then assail,  
When wrapt in *Irony's* transparent veil:  
Her beauties half-conceal'd the more surprize, 265  
And keener lustre sparkles in her eyes.  
Then be your line with sharp encomiums grac'd:  
Style *Clodius* honourable, *Bufa* chaste.

Dart not on Folly an indignant eye:  
Who e'er discharg'd Artillery on a Fly? 270  
Deride not Vice: Absurd the thought and vain,  
To bind the Tiger in so weak a chain.  
Nay more: when flagrant crimes your laughter move,  
The Knave exults: to smile is to approve.  
The Muse's labour then success shall crown, 275  
When Folly feels her smile, and Vice her frown.

Know next what measures to each Theme belong,  
And suit your thoughts and numbers to your song:  
On wing proportion'd to your quarry rise,  
And stoop to earth, or soar among the skies. 280  
Thus when a modish folly you rehearse,  
Free the expression, simple be the verse.  
In artless numbers paint th' ambitious Peer,  
That mounts the box, and shines a Charioteer:  
In strains familiar sing the midnight toil 285  
Of Camps and Senates disciplin'd by *Hoyle*;  
Patriots and Chiefs, whose deep design invades  
And carries off the captive King — of *Spades*!  
Let SATIRE here in milder vigour shine,  
And gayly graceful sport along the line; 290  
Bid courtly Fashion quit her thin pretence,  
And smile each Affectation into sense.



Part II. ESSAY ON SATIRE. xv

Not so when Virtue by her Guards betray'd,  
 Spurn'd from her Throne, implores the Muse's aid:  
 When *crimes*, which erst in kindred darkness lay,  
 Rise frontless, and insult the eye of day; 296  
 Indignant *Hymen* veils his hallow'd fires,  
 And white-rob'd Chastity with tears retires;  
 When rank Adultery on the genial bed  
 Hot from *Cocytus* rears her baleful head: 300  
 When private Faith and public Trust are sold,  
 And Traitors barter Liberty for gold:  
 When fell Corruption dark and deep, like fate,  
 Saps the foundation of a sinking State:  
 When Giant-Vice and Irreligion rise, 305  
 On mountain'd falsehoods to invade the skies:  
 Then warmer numbers glow thro' SATIRE's page,  
 And all her smiles are darken'd into rage:  
 On eagle-wing she gains *Parnassus*' height,  
 Not lofty EPIC soars a nobler flight: 310  
 Then keener indignation fires her eye;  
 Then flash her lightnings, and her thunders fly;  
 Wide and more wide her flaming bolts are hurl'd,  
 Till all her wrath involves the guilty World.

Yet SATIRE oft assumes a gentler mien, 315  
 And beams on Virtue's friends a smile serene:  
 She wounds reluctant; pours her balm with joy;  
 Glad to commend where Worth attracts her eye.  
 But chief, when *Virtue*, *Learning*, *Arts* decline,  
 She joys to see *unconquer'd* merit shine; 320  
 Where bursting glorious, with departing ray,  
 True Genius gilds the close of Britain's Day:  
 With joy she sees the stream of Roman art  
 From MURRAY's tongue flow purer to the heart:



XVI      ESSAY ON SATIRE.      Part II.

Sees YORKE to Fame, e'er yet to Manhood known,  
 And just to ev'ry virtue, but his own:  
 Hears unstain'd CAM with generous pride proclaim  
 A SAGE's, CRITIC's, and POET's name:  
 Beholds, where WIDCOMBE's happy hills ascend,  
 Each orphan'd Art and Virtue find a friend:      326  
 To HAGLEY's honour'd Shade directs her view;  
 And culls each flow'r, to form a Wreath for You.

But tread with cautious step this dang'rous ground,  
 Beset with faithless precipices round:      330  
 Truth be your guide: disdain Ambition's call;  
 And if you fall with Truth, you greatly fall.

'Tis Virtue's *native lustre* that must *shine*;  
 The Poet can but *set it* in his line:  
 And who unmov'd with laughter can behold      335  
 A *sordid pebble* meanly grac'd with *gold*?  
 Let *real* Merit then adorn your lays,  
 For Shame attends on prostituted praise:  
 And all your wit, your most distinguish'd art  
 But makes us grieve you want an honest heart.      340

Nor think the Muse by SATIRE's Law confin'd:  
 She yields description of the noblest kind.  
 Inferior art the Landskip may design,  
 And paint the purple ev'ning in the line:  
 Her daring thought essays a higher plan;      345  
 Her hand delineates Passion, pictures Man.  
 And great the toil, the latent soul to trace,  
 To paint the heart, and catch internal grace;  
 By turns bid Vice or Virtue strike our eyes,  
 Now bid a *Wolfey* or a *Cromwell* rise;      350  
 Now with a touch more sacred and refin'd,  
 Call forth a CHESTERFIELD's or LONSDALE's mind.

Here sweet or strong may ev'ry Colour flow;  
Here let the pencil warm, the canvass glow:  
Of light and shade provoke the noble strife, 355  
And wake each striking feature into life.



## PART III.

**T**HRO' Ages thus has SATIRE keenly shin'd,  
 The Friend to Truth, to Virtue, and Mankind:  
 Yet the bright flame from Virtue ne'er had sprung,  
 And Man was guilty e'er the Poet sung. 360  
 This Muse in silence joy'd each better Age,  
 Till glowing crimes had wak'd her into rage.  
 Truth saw her honest spleen with new delight,  
 And bade her wing her shafts, and urge their flight.  
 First on the Sons of Greece she prov'd her art, 365  
 And Sparta felt the fierce IAMBIC dart a).  
 To LATIUM next, avenging SATIRE flew:  
 The flaming faulchion rough LUCILIUS b) drew;  
 With dauntless warmth in Virtue's cause engag'd,  
 And conscious Villains trembled as he rag'd. 370  
 Then sportive HORACE c) caught the gen'rous fire;  
 For SATIRE's bow resign'd the sounding lyre:  
 Each arrow polish'd in his hand was seen,  
 And, as it grew more polish'd, grew more keen.  
 His art, conceal'd in study'd negligence, 375  
 Politely, fly, cajol'd the foes of sense:

### NOTES.

- a) Archilochum proprio rabies armavit iambō. *HOR.*
- b) Ense velut stricto quoties Lucilius ardens  
 Infremuit, rubet auditor cui frigida mens est  
 Criminibus, tacita sudant præcordia culpa. *JUV. S. i.*
- c) Omne vaser vitium ridenti Flaccus amico  
 Tangit, & admissus circum præcordia ludit,  
 Callidus excusso populum suspendere naso. *PERJ. S. i.*

He seem'd to sport and trifle with the dart,  
But while he sported, drove it to the heart.

In graver strains majestic PERSIUS wrote,  
Big with a ripe exuberance of thought: 380  
Greatly sedate, condemn'd a Tyrant's reign,  
And lash'd corruption with a calm disdain.

More ardent eloquence, and boundless rage,  
Inflame bold JUVENAL'S exalted page,  
His mighty numbers aw'd corrupted Rome, 385  
And swept audacious Greatness to its doom;  
The headlong torrent thund'ring from on high,  
Rent the proud rock that lately brav'd the sky.

But lo! the fatal Victor of Mankind,  
Swoln *Luxury*! — pale *Ruin* stalks behind! 390  
As countless Insects from the north-east pour,  
To blast the Spring, and ravage ev'ry flow'r:  
So barb'rous Millions spread contagious death:  
The sick'ning Laurel wither'd at their breath.  
Deep Superstition's night the skies o'erhung, 395  
Beneath whose baleful dews the Poppy sprung.  
No longer Genius woo'd the Nine to love,  
But Dulness nodded in the Muse's grove:  
Wit, Spirit, Freedom, were the sole offence,  
Nor aught was held so dangerous as Sense. 400

At length, again fair Science shot her ray,  
Dawn'd in the skies, and spoke returning day.  
Now, SATIRE, triumph o'er thy flying foe,  
Now load thy quiver, string thy flaken'd bow!  
'Tis done — See great ERASMUS breaks the spell,  
And wounds triumphant Folly in her Cell! 406  
(In vain the solemn Cowl surrounds her face,  
Vain all her bigot cant, her sour grimace)



xx ESSAY ON SATIRE. Part III.

With shame compell'd her leaden throne to quit,  
And own the force of Reason urg'd by Wit. 410

'Twas then plain *DONNE* in honest vengeance rose,  
His Wit harmonious, tho' his Rhyme was prose:  
He 'midst an Age of Puns and Pedants wrote  
With genuine sense, and *Roman* strength of thought.

Yet scarce had SATIRE well relum'd her flame,  
(With grief the Muse records her Country's shame)

Ere *Britain* saw the foul revolt commence,  
And treach'rous Wit began her war with Sense.

Then rose a shameless mercenary train,  
Whom latest Time shall view with just disdain:

A race fantastick, in whose gaudy line 421

Untutor'd thought, and rinsel beauty shine;  
Wit's shatter'd Mirror lies in fragments bright,  
Reflects not Nature, but confounds the sight.

Dry Morals the Court-Poet blush'd to sing: 425

'Twas all his praise to say, "*the oddest thing.*"

Proud for a jest obscene, a Patron's nod,

To martyr Virtue, or blaspheme his God.

Ill-fated *DRYDEN*! who unmov'd can see 429

Th' extremes of wit and meanness join'd in Thee!

Flames that could mount, and gain their kindred skies,  
Low-creeping in the putrid sick of vice:

A Muse whom Wisdom woo'd, but woo'd in vain,

The Pimp of Pow'r, the Prostitute to Gain. 434

Wreaths, that should deck fair Virtue's form alone,

To Scoundrels, Traitors, Tyrants, vilely thrown:

Unrival'd Pains, the scorn of honest fame;

And Genius rise, a Monument of shame!

More happy *France*: immortal *BOILEAU* there  
Supported Genius with a Sage's care; 440



Part III. ESSAY ON SATIRE. XXI

Him with her love propitious SATIRE blest,  
And breath'd her airs divine into his breast:  
Fancy and Sense to form his line conspire,  
And faultless Judgment guides the purest Fire.

But see, at length, the *British* Genius smile, 445  
And show'r her bounties o'er her favour'd Isle:  
Behold for POPE she twines the laurel crown,  
And centers ev'ry Poet's pow'r in *one*:  
Each *Roman's* force adorns his various page;  
Gay smiles, collected strength, and manly rage.  
Despairing Guilt and Dulness loath the sight, 451  
As Spectres vanish at approaching light:  
In this clear Mirror with delight we view  
Each image justly fine, and boldly true:  
Here Vice, drag'd forth by Truth's supreme decree,  
Beholds and hates her own deformity! 456  
While self-seen Virtue in the faithful line  
With modest joy surveys her form divine.  
But oh, what thoughts, what numbers shall I find,  
But faintly to express the Poet's mind! 460  
Who yonder Star's effulgence can display,  
Unless he dip his pencil in the ray?  
Who paint a God, unless the God inspire?  
What catch the Lightning, but the speed of fire?  
So, mighty POPE, to make thy Genius known,  
All pow'r is weak, all numbers — but thy own. 466  
Each Muse for thee with kind contention strove,  
For thee the Graces left th' *IDALIAN* grove;  
With watchful fondness o'er thy cradle hung,  
Attun'd thy voice, and form'd thy infant tongue.  
Next, to her Bard majestic Wisdom came; 471  
The Bard enraptur'd caught the heav'nly flame:

xxii      ESSAY ON SATIRE. Part III.

With taste superior scorn'd the venal tribe,  
 Whom fear can sway, or guilty greatness bribe;  
 At Fancy's call who rear the wanton sail,      475  
 Sport with the stream, and trifle in the gale:  
 Sublimer views *thy* daring Spirit bound;  
 Thy mighty Voyage was Creation's round;  
 Intent new Worlds of Wisdom to explore,  
 And blest Mankind with Virtue's sacred store;  
 A nobler joy than Wit can give, impart;      481  
 And pour a moral transport o'er the heart.  
 Fantastic Wit shoots momentary fires,  
 And, like a Meteor, while we gaze, expires:  
 Wit kindled by the sulph'rous breath of Vice,      485  
 Like the blue lightning, while it shines, destroys:  
 But Genius, fir'd by Truth's eternal ray,  
 Burns clear and constant, like the source of day:  
 Like this, its beam prolific and refin'd,  
 Feeds, warms, inspirits, and exalts the mind;      492  
 Mildly dispels each wint'ry Passion's gloom,  
 And opens all the Virtues into bloom.  
 This Praise, immortal POPE, to thee be giv'n:  
 Thy Genius was indeed a *Gift* from Heav'n.  
 Hail, Bard unequal'd, in whose deathless line      495  
 Reason and Wit with strength collected shine;  
 Where matchless Wit but wins the second praise,  
 Lost, nobly lost, in Truth's superior blaze.  
 Did FRIENDSHIP e'er mislead thy wand'ring Muse?  
 That Friendship sure may plead the *great* excuse;  
 That sacred Friendship which inspir'd thy Song,  
 Fair in defect, and *amiably* wrong.  
 Error like this ey'n Truth can scarce reprove;  
 'Tis almost Virtue when it flows from Love.

# Part III. ESSAY ON SATIRE.

XXIII

Ye deathless Names, ye Sons of endless praise,  
 By Virtue crown'd with never-fading bays! 506  
 Say, shall an artless Muse, if you inspire,  
 Light her pale lamp at your immortal fire?  
 Or if, O WARBURTON, inspir'd by You,  
 The daring Muse a nobler path pursue, 510  
 By You inspir'd; on trembling pinion soar,  
 The sacred founts of social bliss explore,  
 In her bold numbers chain the Tyrant's rage,  
 And bid *her Country's glory* fire her page:  
 If such her fate, do thou, fair *Truth*, descend, 515  
 And watchful guard her in an honest end:  
 Kindly severe, instruct her equal line  
 To court no Friend, nor own a Foe but *thine*.  
 But if her giddy eye should vainly quit  
 Thy sacred paths, to run the maze of wit; 520  
 If her apostate heart should e'er incline  
 To offer incense at Corruption's shrine;  
 Urge, urge thy pow'r, the black attempt confound,  
 And dash the smould'ring Censer to the ground.  
 Thus aw'd to fear, instructed Bards may see, 525  
 That Guilt is doom'd to sink in Infamy.



5 NO59

AN  
E S S A Y  
ON  
M A N :

TO  
H. St. JOHN L. BOLINGBROKE.







## THE D E S I G N.

HAVING propos'd to write some pieces on Human Life and Manners, such as (to use my lord Bacon's expression) *come home to Men's Business and Customs*, I thought it more satisfactory to begin with considering *Men* in the abstract, his *Nature* and his *State*; since, to prove any moral Duty, to enforce any moral precept, or to examine the perfection or imperfection of any creature whatsoever, it is necessary first to know what *condition* and *relation* it is placed in, and what is the proper *end* and *purpose* of its *being*.

The science of Human Nature is, like all other sciences, reduced to a *few clear points*: There are not *many certain truths* in this world. It is therefore in the Anatomy of the mind as in that of the Body; more good will accrue to mankind by attending to the large, open, and perceptible parts, than by studying too much such finer nerves and vessels, the conformations and uses of which will for ever escape our observation. The *disputes* are all upon these last, and, I will venture to say, they have less sharpened the *wits* than the *hearts* of men against each other, and have diminished the practice, more than advanced the theory, of Morality. If I could flatter myself that this Essay has any merit, it is in steering betwixt the extremes of doctrines seemingly opposite, in passing over terms utterly unintelligible, and in forming a *temperate* yet not *inconsistent*, and a *short* yet not *imperfect* system of Ethics.

This I might have done in prose; but I chose verse, and even rhyme, for two reasons. The one will appear obvious; that principles, maxims, or precepts so written, both strike the reader more strongly at first, and are more easily retained by him afterwards: The other may seem odd, but is true, I found I could express them more *shortly* this way than in prose itself; and nothing is more certain, than that much of the *force* as well as *grace* of arguments or instructions, depends on their *conciseness*. I was unable to treat this part of my subject more in *detail*, without becoming dry and tedious; or more *poetically*, without sacrificing perspicuity to ornament, without wandering from the precision

## THE DESIGN.

or breaking the chain of reasoning: If any man can unite all these without diminution of any of them: I freely confess he will compass a thing above my capacity.

What is now published, is only to be considered as a *general Map* of MAN, marking out no more than the *greater parts*, their *extent*, their *limits*, and their *connection*, but leaving the particular to be more fully delineated in the charts which are to follow. Consequently, these Epistles in their progress (if I have health and leisure to make any progress) will be less dry, and more susceptible of poetical ornament. I am here only opening the *fountains*, and clearing the passage. To deduce the *rivers*, to follow them in their course, and to observe their effects, may be a task more agreeable.





AN  
ESSAY ON MAN,  
IN  
FOUR EPISTLES,  
TO  
*H. St. John, Lord Bolingbroke.*

---

ARGUMENT  
OF  
EPISTLE I.

*Of the Nature and State of Man with respect to the  
UNIVERSE.*

OF Man in the abstract — I. That we can judge only with regard to our own system, being ignorant of the relations of systems and things, v. 17, &c. II. That Man is not to be deemed imperfect, but a Being suited to his place and rank in the creation, agreeable to the general Order of things, and conformable to End and Relations to him unknown, v. 35, &c. III. That it is partly upon his ignorance of future events, and partly upon the hope of a future state, that all his happiness in the present depends, v. 77, &c. IV. The pride of aiming at more knowledge, and pretending to more Perfection, the cause of Man's error and misery. The impiety of putting himself in the place of God, and judging of the fitness or unfitness, perfection or imperfection, justice or injustice of his dispensations, v. 109, &c. V. The absurdity of conceiving himself the final cause of the creation, or expecting that perfection in the moral world, which is not in the natural, v. 131, &c. VI. The unreasonableness



## ARGUMENT.

of his complaints against Providence, while on the one hand he demands the perfections of the Angels, and on the other the bodily qualifications of the Brutes; though, to possess any of the sensitive faculties in a higher degree, would render him miserable; v. 173, &c.

VII. That throughout the whole visible world, an universal order and gradation in the sensual and mental faculties is observed, which causes a subordination of creature to creature, and of all creatures to Man. The gradations of sense, instinct, thought, reflection, reason; that Reason alone counterpoises all the other faculties, v. 207.

VIII. How much further this order and subordination of living creatures may extend, above and below us; were any part of which broken, not that part only, but the whole connected creation must be destroyed, v. 233.

IX. The extravagance, madness, and pride of such a desire, v. 250.

X. The consequence of all, the absolute submission due to Providence, both as to our present and future state, v. 281, &c. to the end.





5 NO59

*[Faint, illegible text, possibly a title or description, located below the main image area.]*



*HOPE* humbly then, with trembling Pinions soar,  
Wait the great teacher Death; and God adore!  
E pray on Man, Ep I.



## EPISTLE I.

**A**WAKE, my St. John! leave all meaner things  
To low ambition, and the pride of Kings.  
Let us (since Life can little more supply  
Than just to look about us and to die)  
Expatiate free o'er all this scene of Man;       5  
A mighty maze! but not without a plan;  
A Wild, where weeds and flow'rs promiscuous shoot;  
Or Garden, tempting with forbidden fruit.

## COMMENTARY.

THE Opening of this poem, in fifteen lines, is taken up in giving an account of the Subject; which, agreeably to the title, is an ESSAY on MAN, or a Philosophical Enquiry into his *Nature and End*, his *Passions and Pursuits*.

The Exordium relates to the whole work, of which the *Essay on Man* was only the first book. The 6th, 7th, and 8th lines allude to the subjects of this *Essay*, viz. the general Order and Design of Providence; the Constitution of the human Mind; the origin, use, and end of the Passions and Affections, both selfish and social; and the wrong pursuits of Power, Pleasure, and Happiness. The 10th, 11th, 12th, &c. have relation to the subjects of the books intended to follow, viz. the Characters and Capacities of Men, and the Limits of Science, which once transgressed, ignorance begins, and error follows. The 13th and 14th, to the Knowledge of Mankind, and the various Manners of the age.

## NOTES.

VER. 7, 8. *A Wild, — Or Garden.* The *Wild* relates to the human *passions*, productive (as he explains in the second epistle) both of good and evil. The *Garden*, to human *reason*, so often *tempting* us to transgress the bounds God has set to it, and wander in fruitless enquiries.



Together let us beat this ample field,  
 Try what the open, what the covert yield; 10  
 The latent tracts, the giddy heights, explore  
 Of all who blindly creep, or sightless soar;  
 Eye Nature's walks, shoot Folly as it flies,  
 And catch the Manners living as they rise;  
 Laugh where we must, be candid where we can; 15  
 But vindicate the ways of God to Man.

## COMMENTARY.

Next, in line 16, he tells us with what design he wrote, *viz.*

*To vindicate the ways of God to Man.*

The Men he writes against, he frequently informs us, are such as *weigh their opinion against Providence* (v. 114.) such as cry, *if Man's unhappy, God's unjust* (v. 118.) or such as fall into the notion, *that Vice and Virtue there is none at all* (Ep. ii. v. 212.) This occasions the poet to divide his vindication of the ways of God into two parts. In the first of which he gives direct answers to those objections which libertine Men, on a view of the disorders arising from the perversity of the human will, have intended against Providence. And in the second, he obviates all those objections, by a true delineation of human Nature; or a general, but exact,

## NOTES.

VER. 12. *Of all who blindly creep, &c.* i. e. Those who only follow the blind guidance of their Passions; or those who leave behind them common sense and sober reason, in their high flights through the regions of Metaphysics. Both which follies are exposed in the fourth epistle, where the popular and philosophical errors concerning Happiness are detected. The figure is taken from animal life.

VER. 15. *Laugh where we must, &c.* Intimating that human follies are so strangely absurd, that it is not in the power of the most compassionate, on some occasions, to restrain their mirth: And that human crimes are so flagitious, that the most candid have seldom an opportunity, on this subject, to exercise their virtues.

I. Say first, of God above, or Man below,  
 What can we reason, but from what we know?  
 Of Man, what see we but his station here,  
 From which to reason, or to which refer? 20  
 Thro' worlds unnumber'd tho' the God be known,

## COMMENTARY.

*map of Man.* The first epistle is employed in the management of the first part of this dispute; and the three following in the discussion of the second. So that this whole book constitutes a complete *Essay on Man*, written for in the best purpose, to vindicate the ways of God.

VER. 17. *Say first, of God above, or Man below, &c.*) The poet having declared his *Subject*, his *End of writing*, and the *Quality of his Adversaries*, proceeds (from v. 16 to 23.) to instruct us, from whence he intends to draw his arguments; namely, from the visible things of God in this system to demonstrate the invisible things of God, his eternal Power and God-head: And why? because we can reason only from what we know, and as we know no more of Man than what we see of his station here; so we know no more of God than what we see of his dispensations in this station; being able to trace him no further than to the limits of our own system, This naturally leads the poet to exprobrate the miserable Folly and Impiety of pretending to pry into, and call in question, the profound dispensations of Providence: Which reproof contains (from v. 22 to 43.) a sublime description of the Omniscience of God, and the miserable Blindness and Presumption of Man.

## NOTES.

VER. 19, 20. *Of Man, what see we but his station here,  
 From which to reason, or to which refer?*

The sense is, we see nothing of Man, but as he stands at present in his station here: From which station, all our reasonings on his nature and end must be drawn; and to this station they must be all referred. The consequence is, all our reasonings on his nature and end must needs be very imperfect.

VER. 21. *Thro' worlds unnumber'd, &c.*) Hunc cognoscimus solummodo per Proprietates suas & Attributa, & per sapientissimas & optimas rerum structuras & causas finales. *Newtoni Princ. Schol. gen. sub fin.*

'Tis ours to trace him only in our own.  
 He, who thro' vast immensity can pierce,  
 See worlds on worlds compose one universe,  
 Observe how system into system runs, 25  
 What other planets circle other suns,  
 What vary'd Being peoples ev'ry star,  
 May tell why Heav'n has made us as we are.  
 But of this frame the bearings and the ties,  
 The strong connections, nice dependencies, 30  
 Gradations just, has thy pervading soul  
 Look'd thro'? or can a part contain the whole?

Is the great chain, that draws all to agree,  
 And drawn supports, upheld by God, or thee?

#### NOTES.

VER. 30. *The strong connections, nice dependencies,*) The thought is very noble. and expressed with great philosophic beauty and exactness. The system of the Universe is a combination of *natural* and *moral* Fitnesses, as the human system is, of *body* and *spirit*. By the *strong connections*, therefore, the Poet alluded to the *natural* part; and by the *nice dependencies* to the *moral*. For the *Essay on Man* is not a system of *Naturalism* but of *natural Religion*. Hence it is, that, where he supposes disorders may tend to some greater good in the *natural* world, he supposes they may tend likewise to some greater good in the *moral*, as appears from these sublime images in the following lines,

If plagues or earthquakes break not Heav'n's design,  
 Why then a Borgia, or a Catiline?  
 Who knows, but he, whose hand the lightning forms,  
 Who heaves old Ocean, and who wings the storms;  
 Pours fierce Ambition in a Cæsar's mind,  
 Or turns young Ammon loose to scourge mankind?

II. Presumptuous Man! the reason wouldst thou find 35  
 Why form'd so weak, so little, and so blind?  
 First, if thou canst, the harder reason guess,  
 Why form'd no weaker, blinder, and no less?  
 Ask of thy mother earth, why oaks are made  
 Taller or stronger than the weeds they shade? 40  
 Or ask of yonder argent fields above,  
 Why Jove's Satellites are less than Jove?  
 Of Systems possible, if 'tis confess'd  
 That Wisdom infinite must form the best,

COMMENTARY.

VER. 43. *Of systems possible, &c.*) So far his modest and sober Introduction; in which he truly observes, that no wisdom less than omniscient

Can tell why Heav'n has made us as we are.

Yet, though we be unable to discover the *particular* reasons for this mode of our existence, we may be assured in *general* that it is *right*. For now, entering upon his argument, he lays down this evident proposition as the foundation of his Thesis, which he reasonably supposes will be allowed him, *That, of all possible systems, infinite wisdom hath formed the best* (v. 43, 44.) From whence he draws two consequences:

I. The *first* (from v. 44 to 51) is, that as the best system cannot but be such a one as hath no unconnected Void; such a one in which there is a perfect coherence and gradual subordination in all its parts; there must needs be, in some part or other of the scale of reasoning life, such a creature as MAN: which reduces the dispute to this absurd question, *Whether God has placed him wrong?*

NOTES.

VER. 35 to 42.) In these lines the poet has joined the beauty of argumentation to the sublimity of thought; where the similar instances, proposed for his adversaries examination, shew as well the *absurdity* of their complaints against Order, as the *fruitlessness* of their enquiries into the arcana of the Godhead



Where all must full or not coherent be, 45  
 And all that rises, rise in due degree:  
 Then, in the scale of reas'ning life, 'tis plain,  
 There must be, somewhere, such a rank as Man:  
 And all the question (wrangle e'er so long)  
 Is only this, if God has plac'd him wrong? 50  
     Respecting Man. whatever wrong we call  
 May, must be right, as relative to all.  
 In human works, tho' labour'd on with pain,  
 A thousand movements scarce one purpose gain;

## COMMENTARY.

VER. 51. *Respecting Man, &c.*) It being shewn that MAN, the Subject of his enquiry, has a necessary place in such a system as this is confessed to be; and it being evident, that the abuse of Free-will, from whence proceeds all moral evil, is the certain effect of such a creature's existence; the next question will be, How these evils can be accounted for, consistently with the idea we have of God's attributes? Therefore,

2. The second consequence he draws from his principle, *That of all possible systems, infinite Wisdom has formed the best*, is. that whatever is wrong in our private system, is right as relative to the whole:

Respecting Man, whatever wrong we call,  
 May, must be right, as relative to ALL.

That it may, he proves (from v. 52 to 61.) by shewing in what consists the difference between the *systematic* works of God, and those of Man; *viz.* that, in the latter, a thousand movements scarce gain one purpose; in the former, one movement gains many purposes. So that

— Man, who here seems *principal* alone

Perhaps acts *second* to some sphere unknown.

And acting thus, the appearances of *wrong* in the *partial* system, may be *right* in the *universal*: For

'Tis but a part we see, and not a whole.

That it *must*, the whole body of this epistle is employed to illustrate and inforce. Thus *partial Evil is universal Good*; and thus Providence is fairly acquitted.

# Ep I. ESSAY ON MAN.

7

In God's, one single can its end produce; 55  
 Yet serves to second too some other use.  
 So Man, who here seems principal alone,  
 Perhaps acts second to some sphere unknown,  
 Touches some wheel, or verges to some goal;  
 'Tis but a part we see, and not a whole. 60

When the proud steed shall know why Man restrains  
 His fiery course, or drives him o'er the plains;  
 When the dull Ox, why now he breaks the clod,  
 Is now a victim, and now Ægypt's God:  
 Then shall Man's pride and dulness comprehend

## VARIATIONS.

In the former Editions v. 64.

Now wears a garland an Egyptian God.  
 altered as above for the reason given in the note.

## COMMENTARY.

VER. 61. *When the proud steed, &c.* From all this he draws a general conclusion (from v. 60 to 91.) that, as what has been said is sufficient to vindicate the ways of Providence, Man should rest content and submissive, and confess every thing to be disposed for the best; that to think of discovering the manner how God conducts this wonderful scheme to its completion, is as absurd as to imagine that the horse and ox shall ever be able to comprehend why they undergo such different *manage* and *fortunes* in the hand of Man; nay, that such knowledge, if communicated, would be even *pernicious* to Man, and make him *neglect* or *desert* his Duty here. This he illustrates by an instance in the lamb, which is happy in not knowing the fate that attends it from the butcher; and from thence takes occasion to observe, that God is the equal master of all his creatures, and provides for the proper happiness of each.

## NOTES.

VER. 64 — *Ægypt's God*) Called so because the God *Apis* was worshiped universally over the whole land.

His actions', passions', being's, use and end; 66  
 Why doing, suffering, check'd, impell'd; and why  
 This hour a slave, the next a deity.

Then say not Man's imperfect, Heav'n in fault;  
 Say rather, Man's as perfect as he ought: 70  
 His knowledge measur'd to his state and place;  
 His time a moment, and a point his space.  
 If to be perfect in a certain sphere,  
 What matter, soon or late, or here or there?  
 The blest to-day is as completely so, 75  
 As who began a thousand years ago.

III. Heav'n from all creatures hides the book of Fate,  
 All but the page prescrib'd, their present state:  
 From brutes what men, from men what spirits know:  
 Or who could suffer Being here below? 80  
 The lamb thy riot dooms to bleed to-day,  
 Had he thy Reason, would he skip and play?  
 Pleas'd to the last, he crops the flow'ry food,  
 And licks the hand just rais'd to shed his blood.  
 Oh blindness to the future! kindly giv'n, 85  
 That each may fill the circle mark'd by Heav'n:  
 Who sees with equal eye, as God of all,

#### VARIATIONS.

After v. 68. the following lines in first Ed.

If to be perfect in a certain sphere,  
 What matters soon or late, or here or there?  
 The blest to-day is as completely so  
 As who began ten thousand years ago.

#### NOTES.

VER. 87. *Who sees with equal eye, &c.* Mat. x, 29.

A hero perish, or a sparrow fall,  
 Atoms or systems into ruin hurl'd,  
 And now a bubble burst, and now a world.      90

Hope humbly then; with trembling pinions soar;  
 Wait the great teacher Death; and God adore.  
 What future bliss, he gives not thee to know,

## VARIATIONS.

After v. 88. in the MS.

No great, no little; 'tis as much decreed  
 That Virgil's Gnat should die as Caesar bleed.

In the first Fol. and Quarto,

What bliss *above* he gives not thee to know,  
 But gives that Hope to be thy bliss *below*.

## COMMENTARY.

VER. 91. *Hope humbly then; &c.*) But [now the objector is supposed to put in, and say, You tell us indeed, that all things will terminate in good; but we see ourselves surrounded with present Evil; and yet you forbid us all inquiry into the manner how we are to be extricated; and, in a word, leave us in a very disconsolate condition. Not so, replies the poet, you may reasonably, if you so so please, receive much comfort from the HOPE of a happy futurity; a *Hope* implanted in the human breast by God himself for this very purpose, as an earnest of that Bliss, which, always flying from us here, is reserved for the good Man hereafter. The reason why the poet chuses to insist on this proof of a future state, in preference to others, is in order to give his system (which founded in a sublime and improved *Platonism*) the greater grace of uniformity. For HOPE was *Plato's* peculiar argument for a future state; and the words here employed — *the soul uneasy* &c. his peculiar expression. The poet in this place, therefore, says in express terms, that God gave us Hope to supply that future bliss, which he at present keeps hid from us. In his second epistle, v. 274, he goes still further, and says, this HOPE quits us not even at Death, when every thing mortal drops from us:

Hope travels thro', nor quits us when we die.



But gives that Hope to be thy blessing now.

Hope springs eternal in the human breast: 95

#### COMMENTARY.

And, in the fourth epistle, he shews how the same HOPE is a *proof* of a future state, from the consideration of God's giving man no appetite in vain, or what he did not intend should be satisfied;

He sees, why Nature plants in Man alone  
Hope of known bliss, and Faith in bliss unknown:  
(Nature, whose dictates to no other kind  
Are giv'n in vain, but what they seek they find)

It is only for the *good man*, he tells us, that *Hope* leads from goal to goal, &c. It would be strange indeed then if it should prove a delusion,

#### NOTES

VER. 93. *What future bliss, &c.*) It hath been objected, that the *System of the best* weakens the other natural arguments for a future state; because, if the evils which good Men suffer promote the benefit of the whole, then every thing is here in order, and nothing amiss that wants to be set right: Nor has the good man any reason to expect amends, when the evils he suffered had such a tendency. To this it may be replied. 1. That the poet tells us (Ep. iv. v. 361.) that *God loves from whole to parts*. 2. That the *system of the best* is so far from weakening those natural arguments, that it strengthens and supports them. For if those evils, to which good men are subject, be mere Disorders, without any tendency to the greater good of the whole; then, though we must indeed conclude that they will hereafter be set right, yet this view of things, representing God as suffering disorders for no other end than to set them right, gives us a very low idea of the divine wisdom. But if those evils (according to the *system of the best*) contribute to the greater perfection of the whole; such a reason may be then given for their permission, as supports our idea of divine wisdom to the highest religious purposes. Then, as to the good man's *hopes* of a retribution, those still



Ep. I.      ESSAY ON MAN.      II

Man never Is, but always to be blest:  
The soul, uneasy and confin'd from home,  
Rests and expatiates in a life to come,  
    Lo, the poor Indian! whose untutor'd mind  
Sees God in clouds, or hears him in the wind; 100

COMMENTARY.

VER. 99. *Lo, the poor Indian! &c.*) The poet, as we said, having bid Man comfort himself with expectation of future happiness, having shewn him that this HOPE is an earnest of it, and put in one very necessary caution.

Hope *humbly* then, with *trembling* pinions soar; provoked at those miscreants whom he afterwards (Ep. iii. v. 263.) describes as building *Hell on spite*, and *Heaven on pride*, he upbraids them (from v. 99 to 112.) with the example of the poor Indian,

NOTES.

remain in their original force: For our idea of God's justice, and how far that justice is engaged to a retribution, is exactly and invariably the same on either hypothesis. For though the *system of the best* supposes that the *evils themselves* will be fully compensated by the good they produce to the *whole*, yet this is so far from supposing that *particulars* shall suffer for a *general good*, that it is essential to *this system* to conclude, that, at the completion of things, when the whole is arrived to the state of utmost perfection, *particular and universal good* shall coincide.

Such is the World's great harmony, that springs  
From Order, Union, full Consent of things.

Where *small* and *great*, where *weak* and *mighty*, made

To *serve*, not *suffer*, *strengthen*, not *invade*, &c. Ep. iii. v. 295.

Which coincidence can never be, without a retribution to good men for the evils suffered here below.

VER. 97. — *from home*,) The construction is, „The soul „being from home (confined and uneasy) expatiates, &c., by which words, it was the poet's purpose to teach, that the present life is only a state of probation for another, more suitable to the essence of the soul; and to the free exercise of it's qualities.

His soul, proud Science never taught to stray  
 Far as the solar walk, or milky way;  
 Yet simple Nature to his hope has giv'n,  
 Behind the cloud-topt hill, an humbler heav'n;  
 Some safer world in depth of woods embrac'd, 105  
 Some happier island in the watry waste,  
 Where slaves once more their native land behold,  
 No fiends torment, no Christians thirst for gold,  
 To Be, contents his natural desire,  
 He asks no Angel's wing, no Seraph's fire; 110  
 But thinks, admitted to that equal sky,  
 His faithful dog shall bear him company,

IV. Go, wiser thou! and, in thy scale of sense,  
 Weigh thy Opinion against Providence;

#### VARIATIONS.

After v. 108. in the first Ed.

But does he say the maker is not good,  
 Till he's exalted to what state he wou'd:  
 Himself alone high Heav'n's peculiar care,  
 Alone made happy when he will, and where?

#### COMMENTARY.

to whom also Nature hath given this *common* HOPE of Mankind: But, tho' his untutored mind had betrayed him into many childish fancies concerning the nature of that future state, yet he is so far from excluding any part of his own species (a vice which could proceed only from the *pride* of Science) that he humanely admits even his *faithful dog to bear him company*,

VER. 113. *Go, wiser thou! &c.* He proceeds with these accusers of providence (from v. 112 to 122.) and shews them, that complaints against the *established order of things* begin in the *highest absurdity*, from misapplied *reason* and *power*, and end in the *highest impiety*, in an attempt to degrade the God of heaven, and assume his place:

Alone made perfect here, immortal there:

Ep. I.      ESSAY ON MAN.      13

Call imperfection what thou fancy'st such      115  
 Say, here he gives too little, there too much:  
 Destroy all creatures for thy sport or gust,  
 Yet cry, If Man's unhappy, God's unjust;  
 If Man alone ingross not Heav'n's high care,  
 Alone made perfect here, immortal there:      120  
 Snatch from his hand the balance and the rod,  
 Re-judge his justice, be the God of God,  
 In Pride, in reasoning Pride, our error lies;

COMMENTARY.

That is, be made God, *who only is perfect, and hath immortality:*  
 To which sense the lines immediately following confine us;

Snatch from his hand the balance and the rod,  
 Re-judge his justice, be the God of God.

VER. 123. *In Pride, in reasoning Pride, our error lies; &c.*  
 From these men the poet now turns to his friend, and (from  
 v. 123 to 130.) remarks, that the ground of all this extravagance  
 is *Pride*; which, more or less, infects the whole Species; shews  
 the ill effects of it, in the case of the fallen Angels; and ob-  
 serves, that *even* wishing to invert the laws of Order, is a lower  
 species of their crime: Then brings an instance of one of the  
 effects of Pride, which is the folly of thinking every thing made  
*solely* for the use of Man; without the least regard to any other  
 of God's creatures.

Ask for what end the heav'nly bodies shine, &c.

NOTES.

VER. 123. *In Pride, &c.* Arnobius has passed the same cen-  
 sure on these very follies, which he supposes to arise from the  
 cause here assigned. — „Nihil est quod nos fallat, nihil quod no-  
 „bis polliceatur spes cassas (id quod nobis a quibusdam dicitur  
 „viris immoderata sui opinione sublati) animas immortales esse,  
 „Deo, rerum ac principi, gradu proximas dignitatis, genitore illo  
 „ac patre prolatas, divinas, sapientes, doctas, neque ulla corporis  
 „attestatione contiguas., Adversus gentes.

All quit their sphere, and rush into the skies.  
 Pride still is aiming at the blest abodes, 125  
 Men would be Angels, Angels would be Gods.  
 Aspiring to be Gods, if Angels fell,  
 Aspiring to be Angels, Men rebel:  
 And who but wishes to invert the laws  
 Of ORDER, sins against th' Eternal Cause. 130

V. Ask for what end the heav'nly bodies shine,  
 Earth for whose use? Pride answers, „Tis for mine;  
 „For me kind Nature wakes her genial pow'r,  
 „Suckles each herb, and spreads out ev'ry flow'r;  
 „Annual for me, the grape, the rose renew 135  
 „The juice nectareous, and the balmy dew;  
 „For me, the mine a thousand treasures brings;  
 „For me, health gushes from a thousand springs;

## COMMENTARY.

The ridicule of imagining the *greater portions* of the material system to be solely for the use of Man, Philosophy has sufficiently exposed: And Common sense, as the poet observes, instructs us to know that our fellow creatures, placed by Providence the joint-inhabitants of this globe, are designed by Providence to be joint-sharers with us of its blessings:

Has God, thou fool! work'd solely for *thy* good,

*Thy* joy, *thy* pastime, *thy* attire, *thy* food?

Who for *thy* table feeds the wanton fawn,

For *him* as kindly spreads the flow'ry lawn,

Ep. iii. v. 27.

## NOTES.

VER. 131. *Ask for what end, &c.*) If there be any fault in these lines, it is not in the general sentiment, but a want of exactness in expressing it. — It is the highest absurdity to think that *Earth* is man's *foot-stool*, his *canopy* the *skies*, and the *heav'nly bodies* lighted up principally for his use; yet not so, to suppose fruits and minerals given for this end.

Ep. I.      ESSAY ON MAN.      15

„Seas roll to waft me, suns to light me rise;  
 „My foot-stool earth, my canopy the skies.,, 140  
 But errs not Nature from this gracious end,  
 From burning suns when lived deaths descend,  
 When earthquakes swallow, or when tempests sweep  
 Towns to one grave, whole nations to the deep?  
 „No (’tis reply’d) the first Almighty Cause 145  
 „Acts not by partial, but by gen’ral laws;  
 „Th’ exceptions few; some change since all began:  
 „And what created perfect?,, — Why then Man?  
 If the great end be human Happiness,

COMMENTARY.

VER. 141. *But errs not Nature from this gracious end,*) The author comes next to the confirmation of his Thesis, That *partial moral Evil is universal Good*; but introduceth it with a proper argument to abate our wonder at the phenomenon of moral Evil, which argument he builds on a concession of his adversaries: If we ask you, says he (from v. 140 to 150.) whether Nature doth not err from the gracious purpose of its creator, when plagues, earthquakes, and tempests unpeople whole regions at a time; you readily answer, No. For that God acts by general, and not by particular laws, and that the course of matter and motion must be necessarily subject to some irregularities, because nothing is created perfect. I then ask why you should expect this perfection in Man? If you own that the *great end of God* (notwithstanding all this deviation) be *general happiness*, then ’tis *Nature*, and not God, that deviates; and do you expect greater constancy in Man?

Then Nature deviates; and can Man do less?  
 That is, if Nature, or the inanimate system (on which God hath imposed his laws, which it obeys as a machine obeys the hand of the workman) may in course of time deviate from its first direction, as the best philosophy shews it may; where is the wonder that Man, Who was created a free Agent, and hath it in his power every moment to transgress the eternal rule of Right, should sometimes go out of Order?



Then Nature deviates; and can Man do less? 150  
As much that end a constant course requires

## COMMENTARY.

VER. 151. *As much that end, &c.*) Having thus shewn how moral evil came into the world, namely, by *Man's abuse of his own free-will*; he comes to the point, the *confirmation* of his thesis, by shewing how *moral evil promotes good*; and employs the *same* concessions of his adversaries, concerning *natural evil*, to illustrate it.

1. He shews it tends to the *good* of the *whole*, or *Universe* (from v. 151 to 164.) and this by analogy. You own, says he, that storms and tempests, clouds, rain, heat, and variety of seasons are necessary (notwithstanding the accidental evil they bring with them) to the health and plenty of this Globe; why then should you suppose there is not the same use, with regard to the Universe, in a Borgia or a Carline? But you say you can see one and not the other. You say right; one terminates in this *system*, the other refers to the *whole*: of which none are capable of judging but the great Author himself: For, says the poet, in another place,

— of this Frame the bearings, and the ties,

The strong connections, nice dependencies,

Gradations just, has thy pervading soul

Look'd thro' or can a *part* contain the *whole*? v. 29, & seq.

Own therefore, says he, that

From Pride, from Pride, our very Reas'ning springs;

Account for *moral*, as for *nat'ral* things:

Why charge we Heav'n in those, in these, acquit?

In both, to *reason right* is to *submit*.

## NOTES.

VER. 150. *Then Nature deviates, &c.*) „While comets move  
„in very eccentric orbs, in all manner of positions, blind Fate  
„could never make all the planets move one and the same way  
„in orbs concentric; some inconsiderable irregularities excepted,  
„which may have risen from the mutual actions of comets and  
„planets upon one another, and which will be apt to increase,  
„till this system wants a reformation., Sir Isaac Newton's *Optics*,  
*Quest. ult.*

Of show'rs and sun-shine, as of Man's desires;  
 As much eternal springs and cloudless skies,  
 As Men for ever temp'rate, calm, and wise.  
 If plagues or earthquakes break not Heav'n's design,  
 Why then a Borgia, or a Catiline? 156  
 Who knows but he, whose hand the light'ning forms,  
 Who heaves old Ocean, and who wings the storms;

## NOTES.

VER: 155. *If plagues, &c.*) What hath misled some persons in this passage, is their supposing the comparison to be between the effects of *two things in this sublunary world*; when not only the elegance, but the justness of it, consists in its being between the effects of a thing in the *universe at large*, and the familiar and known effects of one in *this sublunary world*. For the position inforced in these lines is this, that *partial evil tends to the good of the whole*:

Respecting Man, whatever wrong we call,

May, must he right, as relative to all.

v. 51.

How does the poet inforce it? if you will believe these persons, in illustrating the effects of partial moral evil in a particular system, by that of partial natural evil in the *same* system, and so he leaves his *position* in the lurch. But the poet reasons at another rate: The way to prove his point, he knew, was to illustrate the effect of partial moral evil in the *universe*, by partial natural evil in a *particular system*. Whether partial moral evil tend to the good of the universe, being a question which, by reason of our ignorance of *many* parts of that universe, we cannot decide; but from known effects; the rules of argument require that it be proved by *analogy*, i. e. setting it by, and comparing it with, a thing *certain*; and it is a thing *certain*, that partial natural evil tends to the good of our *particular system*.

VER. 157. *Who knows but he, &c.*) The sublimity with which the great Author of Nature is here characterised, is but the second beauty of this fine passage. The greatest is the making the very dispensation objected to, the periphrasis of his Title.

Pours fierce Ambition in a Cæsar's mind, 159  
 Or turns young Ammon loose to scourge mankind?  
 From pride, from pride, ourvery reas'ning springs;  
 Account for moral, as for nat'ral things:  
 Why charge we Heav'n in those, in these acquit?  
 In both, to reason right is to submit.

Better for Us, perhaps, it might appear, 165  
 Were there all harmony, all virtue here;

## COMMENTARY.

VER. 165. *Better for us, &c.*) But, secondly, to strengthen the foregoing *analogical* argument, and to make the wisdom and goodness of God still more apparent, he observes (from v. 165 to 172.) that *moral evil* is not only productive of good to the whole, but is even productive of good in our own system. It might, says he, perhaps, appear better to us, that there were nothing in this world but peace and virtue:

That never air or ocean felt the wind;

That never passion discompos'd the mind.

But then consider, that as our *material system* is supported by the strife of its elementary particles; so is our *intellectual system* by the conflict of our Passions, which are the elements of human action.

In a word, as without the benefit of tempestuous winds, both air and ocean would stagnate, corrupt, and spread universal contagion throughout all the ranks of animals that inhabit, or are supported by, them; so, without the benefit of the Passions, such virtue as was merely the effect of the absence of those Passions, would be a lifeless calm, a stoical Apathy:

Contracted all, retiring to the breast:

But health of Mind is *Exercise*, not *Rest*.

Ep. ii. v. 103.

Therefore, instead of regarding the conflict of the elements, and the Passions of the mind as disorders, you ought to consider them as part of the *general order* of Providence: And that they are so, appears from their always preserving the same unvaried course, throughout all ages, from the creation to the present time:

That never air or ocean felt the wind;  
 That never passion discompos'd the mind.  
 But ALL subsists by elemental strife;  
 And passions are the elements of Life.

170

## COMMENTARY.

The *general order*, since the Whole began,  
 Is kept in *Nature*, and is kept in *Man*.

We see, therefore, it would be doing great iniustice to our author to suspect that he intended, by this, to give any encouragement to Vice. His system, as all his Ethic Epistles shew, is this: That the *Passions*, for the reasons given above, are necessary to the support of Virtue; That, indeed, the Passions in excess produce Vice, which is, in its own Nature, the greatest of all Evils, and comes into the world from the abuse of Man's free-will; but that God, in his infinite wisdom and goodness, devilyously turns the natural bias of its malignity to the advancement of human happiness, and makes it productive of general Good:

TH' ETERNAL ART EDUCES GOOD FROM ILL.

Ep. ii. v. 175.

This set against what we have observed of the Poet's doctrine of a *future State*, will furnish us with an instance of his *steering* (as he well expresses it in his preface) *between doctrines seemingly opposite*: If his *Essay* has any merit, he thinks it is in this. And doubtless it is uncommon merit to reject the extravagances of every System, and take in only what is rational and real.

The *Characteristics* and the *Fable of the Bees* are two seemingly inconsistent systems; the extravagancy of the first is in giving a scheme of *Virtue without Religion*; and of the latter, in giving a scheme of *Religion without Virtue*. These our Poet leaves to Any that will take them up; but agrees however so far with the first, that „Virtue would be worth having, though „itself was its only reward; and so far with the latter, that God „makes Evil, against its nature, productive of Good. „

## NOTES.

VER. 169. But all subsists, &c.) See this subject extended in Ep. ii. from v. 90 to 112, 155, &c.

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D



The gen'ral ORDER, since the whole began,  
Is kept in Nature, and is kept in Man.

VI. What would this Man? Now upward will he soar,  
And little less than Angel, would be more; 174  
Now looking downwards, just as griev'd appears

## COMMENTARY.

VER. 173. *What would this Man? &c.*) Having thus justified Providence in its permission of partial MORAL EVIL, he employs the remaining part of his Epistle in vindicating it from the imputation of certain supposed NATURAL EVILS. For now he shews (from v. 172 to 207.) that though the complaint of his adversaries against Providence be on pretence of *real moral evils*; yet, at bottom, it all proceeds from their impatience under *imaginary natural ones*, the issue of a depraved appetite for visionary advantages, which if Man had, they would be either *useless* or *pernicious* to him, as unsuitable to his state, or repugnant to his condition. Though God (says he) hath so bountifully bestowed, on Man, Faculties little less than *angelic*, yet he ungratefully grasps at higher; and then, extravagant in another extreme, with a passion as ridiculous as that is impious, envies even the peculiar accommodations of *brutes*. But here his own principles show his folly. He supposes them all made for his use: Now what use could he have of them, when he had robbed them of all their qualities? Qualities, distributed with the highest wisdom, as they are divided at present; but which, if bestowed according to the froward humour of these childish complainers, would be found to be, every where, either *wanting* or *superfluous*. But even with these brutal qualities, Man would not only be no gainer, but a considerable loser; as is shewn, in explaining the consequences that would follow from his having his sensations in that exquisite degree, in which this or that animal is observed to possess them.

## NOTES.

VER. 174. *And little less than Angels, &c.*) Thou hast made him a little lower than the Angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour. Psalm viii, 9.



To want the strength of bulls, the fur of bears.  
 Made for his use all creatures if he call,  
 Say what their use, had he the pow'rs of all;  
 Nature to these, without profusion, kind,  
 The proper organs: proper pow'rs assign'd;      180  
 Each seeming want compensated of course,  
 Here with degrees of swiftness, there of force;  
 All in exact proportion to the state;  
 Nothing to add, and nothing to abate.  
 Each beast, each insect, happy in its own:      175  
 Is Heav'n unkind to Man, and Man alone?  
 Shall he alone, whom rational we call,  
 Be pleas'd with nothing, if not blest'd with all?

The bliss of Man (could Pride that blessing find)  
 Is not to act or think beyond mankind;      190  
 No pow'rs of body or soul to share,  
 But what his nature and his state can bear,  
 Why has not Man a microscopic eye?  
 For this plain reason, man is not a Fly,  
 Say what thẽ use, were finer optic's giv'n,      195  
 T' inspect a mite, not comprehend the heav'n?  
 Or touch, if tremblingly alive all o'er,  
 To smart and agonize at ev'ry pore?  
 Or quick effluvia darting thro' the brain,  
 Die of a rose in aromatic pain?      200  
 If nature thunder'd in his op'ning ears,

NOTES.

VER. 182. *Here with degrees of swiftness, &c.* It is a certain axiom in the anatomy of creatures, that in proportion as they are formed for strength, their swiftness is lessened; or as they are formed for swiftness, their strength is abated. P.

And stunn'd him with the music of the spheres,  
 How would he wish that Heav'n had left him still  
 The whisp'ring Zephyr, and the purling rill?  
 Who finds not Providence all good and wise, 205  
 Alike in what it gives, and what denies?

VII. Far as Creation's ample range extends,  
 The scale of sensual, mental pow'rs ascends:  
 Mark how it mounts, to Man's imperial race,  
 From the green myriads in the peopled grass: 210  
 What modes of fight betwixt each wide extreme,  
 The mole's dim curtain, and the lynx's beam:  
 Of snell, the headlong lioness between,

## COMMENTARY.

VER. 207. *Far as Creation's ample range extends.* He tells us next (from v. 206 to 233.) that the complying with such extravagant desires would not only be useless and pernicious to Man, but would be breaking into the Order, and deforming the Beauty of God's Creation, in which *this* animal is subject to *that*, and every one to Man; who by his Reason enjoys the sum of all their powers.

## NOTES.

VER. 202. *Stunn'd him with the music of the spheres.* This instance is poetical and even sublime, but misplaced. He is arguing philosophically in a case that required him to employ the *real* objects of sense only: and, what is worse, he speaks of this as a *real* object. — If NATURE thunder'd, &c. The case is different where (in v. 253.) he speaks of the motion of the heavenly bodies under the sublime Imagery of *ruling Angels*: For whether there be *ruling Angels* or no, there is *real motion*, which was all his argument wanted; but if there be no *music of the spheres*, there was no *real sound*, which his argument was obliged to find.

VER. 213. *The headlong lioness.* The manner of the lions hunting their prey in the deserts of Africa is this: At their first going out in the night-time they set up a loud roar. and then

And hound sagacious on the tainted green:  
 Of hearing, from the life that fills the flood,      215  
 To that which warbles thro' the vernal wood?  
 The spider's touch, how exquisitely fine!  
 Feels at each thread, and lives along the line:  
 In the nice bee, what sense so subtly true  
 From pois'nous herbs extracts the healing dew?      220  
 How Instinct varies in the grov'ling swine,  
 Compar'd, half-reasning elephant, with thine!  
 Twixt that, and Reason, what a nice barrier?  
 'For ever sep'rate, yet for ever near!  
 Remembrance and Reflection how ally'd;      225  
 What thin partitions Sense from Thought divide?

## NOTES.

listen to the noise made by the beasts in their flight, pursuing them by the ear, and not by the nostril. It is probable the story of the jackal's hunting for the lion, was occasioned by observation of this defect of scent in that terrible animal. P.

VER. 224. *For ever separate, &c.*) Near, by the similitude of the operations; *separate*, by the immense difference in the nature of the powers,

VER. 226. *What thin partitions, &c.*) So thin, that the Atheistic philosophers, as Protagoras, held that *thought was only sense*; and from thence concluded, that *every imagination or opinion of every man was true*: Πᾶσα φαντασία ἐστὶν ἀλήθεια. But the poet determines more philosophically; that they are really and essentially different, how thin soever the partition is by which they are divided. Thus (to illustrate the truth of this observation) when a geometer considers a triangle, in order to demonstrate the equality of its three angles to two right ones, he has the picture or image of some sensible triangle in his mind, which is *sense*; yet notwithstanding, he must needs have the notion or idea of an intellectual triangle likewise, which is *thought*; for this plain reason, because every image or picture of a triangle must needs be obtusangular, or rectangular, or acutangular; but that

And Middle natures, how they long to join,  
 Yet never pass th' insuperable line!  
 Without this just gradation, could they be  
 Subjected, these to those, or all to thee? 230  
 The pow'rs of all subdu'd by thee alone,  
 Is not thy Reason all these pow'rs in one?

VIII. See, thro' this air, this ocean, and this earth,  
 All matter quick, and bursting into birth.

## COMMENTARY.

VER. 233. *See, thro' this air, &c.* And further (from v. 232 to 267.) that this breaking the order of things, which, as a link or chain, connects all beings from the highest to the lowest, would unavoidably be attended with the destruction of the Universe: For that the several parts of it must at least compose as entire and harmonious a whole, as the parts of a human body, can hardly be doubted: Yet we see what confusion it would make in our frame, if the members were set upon invading each other's office:

*What if the Foot, &c.* v. 259, &c.

Who will not acknowledge, therefore, that so harmonious a connection in the disposition of things, as is here described; is transcendently beautiful? But the *Fatalists* suppose such an one. — What then? Is the First Free Agent, the great Cause of all things, debarred from a contrivance so exquisite, because some Men, to set up their idol, Fate, absurdly represent it as presiding over such a system?

## NOTES.

which, in his mind, is the subject of his proposition is the *ratio* of a triangle, undetermined to any of these species. On this account it was that Aristotle said, *Νοήματα τιμὴ διοίτεις, τὲ μὴ Φαντάσματα εἶναι, ἢ ἔδὲ ταῦτα Φαντάσματα, ἀλλ' ἔκ ἀνευ Φαντασμάτων.* The conceptions of the mind differ somewhat from sensible images; they are not sensible images, and yet not quite free or disengaged from sensible images.

Ep. I.      ESSAY ON MAN.      25

Above, how high, progressive life may go!      235  
 Around, how wide! how deep extend below!  
 Vast chain of Being! which from God began,  
 Natures æthereal, human, angel, man,  
 Beast, bird, fish, insect, what no eye can see,  
 No glass can reach; from Infinite to thee,      240  
 From thee to Nothing, --- On superior pow'rs  
 Were we to press, inferior might on ours:  
 Or in the full creation leave a void,  
 Where, one step broken, the great scale's destroy'd:  
 From Nature's chain whatever link you strike,      245  
 Tenth, or then thousandth, breaks the chain alike,  
 And, if each system in gradation roll  
 Alike essential to th' amazing Whole,  
 The least confusion but in one, not all  
 That system only, but the Whole must fall.      250  
 Let Earth unbalanc'd from her orbit fly,

VARIATIONS.

VER. 238. Ed. 1st.

Ethereal essence, spirit, substance, man.

NOTES.

VER. 243. *Or in the full creation leave a void, &c.*) This is only an illustration, alluding to the Peripatetic *plenum* and *vacuum*; the *full* and *void* here meant, relating not to Matter, but to Life.

VER. 247. *And, if each system in gradation roll*) The verb alludes to the *motion* of the planetary bodies of each system; and to the *figures* described by that motion.

VER. 251. *Let earth unbalanc'd*) i. e. Being no longer kept within its orbit by the different directions of its progressive and attractive motions; which, like equal weights in a balance, keep it in an equilibre.



Planets and Suns run lawless thro' the sky;  
 Let ruling Angels from their spheres be hurl'd,  
 Being on Being wreck'd, and world on world;  
 Heav'n's whole foundations to their centre nod, 255  
 And Nature trembles to the throne of God.  
 All this dread ORDER break --- for whom? for thee?  
 Vile worm! --- oh Madness! Pride! Impiety!

IX. What if the foot, ordain'd the dust to tread,  
 Or hand, to toil, aspir'd to be the head? 260  
 What if the head, the eye, or ear repin'd  
 To serve mere engines to the ruling Mind?  
 Just as absurd for any part to claim  
 To be another, in this gen'ral frame:  
 Just as absurd, to mourn the tasks or pains, 265  
 The great directing MIND of ALL ordains,

## NOTES.

VER. 253. *Let ruling Angels &c.*) The poet, throughout this poem, with great art uses an advantage, which his employing a *Platonic* principle for the foundation of his Essay had afforded him; and that is the expressing himself (as here) in *Platonic* notions; which, luckily for his purpose, are highly poetical, at the same time that they add a grace to the uniformity of his reasoning.

VER. 259. *What if the foot, &c.*) This fine illustration in defence of the *System of Nature*, is taken from *St. Paul*, who employed it to defend the *System of Grace*.

VER. 265. *Just as absurd, &c.*) See the Prosecution and application of this in Ep. iv. P.

VER. 266. *The great directing Mind &c.*) „Veneramur autem” „& colimus ob dominium. Deus enim sine dominio, providentia, „& causis finalibus, nihil aliud est quam FATUM & NATURA.” *Newtoni Princip. Schol. gener. sub finem.*

All are but parts of one stupendous whole,  
Whose body Nature is, and God the soul;

## COMMENTARY.

VER. 267. *All are but parts of one stupendous whole,*) Having thus given a representation of God's creation, as *one entire whole*, where all the parts have a necessary dependence on, and relation to each other, and where every Particular works and concurs to the perfection of the whole; as such a system would be thought above the reach of vulgar ideas; to reconcile it to common conceptions, he shews (from v. 266 to 281.) that God is equally and intimately present to every sort of *substance*, to every particle of *matter*, and in every instant of *being*; which eases the labouring imagination, and makes it expect no less from such a *Presence*, than such a *Dispensation*.

## NOTES.

VER. 268. *Whose body Nature is, &c.*) A certain examiner remarks, on this line, that „A Spinozist would express himself „in this Manner., I believe he would, and so, we know, would St. Paul too, when writing on the same subject, namely the omnipresence of God in his Providence, and in his Substance. *In him we live and move and have our being; i. e. we are parts of him, his offspring*, as the Greek poet, a pantheist quoted by the Apostle, observes: And the reason is, because a religious theist and an impious pantheist both profess to believe the omnipresence of God. But would Spinoza, as Mr. Pope does, call God *the great directing Mind of all*, who hath intentionally created a perfect Universe? Or would a Spinozist have told us,

The workman from the work distinct was known,  
a line that overturns all Spinozism from its very foundations.

But this sublime description of the Godhead contains not only the *divinity* of St. Paul; but, if that will not satisfy the men he writes against, the *philosophy* likewise of Sir Isaac Newton.

The Poet says,

All are but parts of one stupendous whole,  
Whose body Nature is, and God the soul,

That, chang'd thro' all, and yet in all the same;  
 Great in the earth, as in th' æthereal frame; 170  
 Warms in the sun, refreshes in the breeze,  
 Glows in the stars, and blossoms in the trees,  
 Lives thro' all life, extends thro' all extent,  
 Spreads undivided, operates unspent;

## NOTES.

That, chang'd thro' all, and yet in all the same,  
 Great in the earth, as in th' æthereal frame,  
 Warms in the sun, refreshes in the breeze,  
 Glows in the stars, and blossoms in the trees,  
 Lives thro' all life, extends thro' all extent,  
 Spreads undivided, operates unspent.

The Philosopher: — „In ipso continentur & moventur universa, sed absque mutua passione. Deus nihil patitur ex corporum motibus; illa nullam sentiunt resistentiam ex omnipræsencia Dei. — Corpore omni & figura corporea destituitur. — Omnia regit & omnia cognoscit. — Cum unaquæque Spatii particula sit semper, & unumquodque Durationis indivisibile momentum, ubique certe rerum omnium Fabricator ac Dominus non erit nunquam, nusquam.,,

Mr. Pope:

Breathes in our soul, informs our mortal part,  
 As full, as perfect; in a hair, as heart;  
 As full, as perfect, in vile Man that mourns,  
 As the rapt Seraph that adores and burns;  
 To him no high; no low, no great, no small;  
 He fills, he bounds, connects, and equals all,

Sir Isaac Newton: — „Annon ex phænomenis constat esse entem incorporeum, viventem, intelligentem, omnipræsentem, qui in spatio infinito, tanquam sensorio suo, res ipsas intime cernat, penitusque perspiciat, totasque intra se præsens præsentem complectatur.,,

Breathes in our soul, informs our mortal part, 275  
As full, as perfect, in a hair as heart;  
As full, as perfect, in vile Man that mourns,  
As the rapt Seraph that adores and burns:  
To him no high, no low, no great, no small;  
He fills, he bounds, connects, and equals all. 280

## NOTES.

But now admitting, there was an ambiguity in these expressions, so great, that a Spinozist might employ them to express his own particular principles; and such a thing might well be, because the Spinozists, in order to hide the impiety of their principle, are wont to express the Omnipresence of God in terms that any religious Theist might employ. In this case, I say, how are we to judge of the poets meaning? Surely by the whole tenor of his argument. Now take the words in the sense of the Spinozists, and he is made, in the conclusion of his epistle, to overthrow all he has been advancing throughout the body of it: For Spinozism is the destruction of an Universe, where every thing tends, by a foreseen contrivance in all its parts, to the perfection of the whole. But allow him to employ the passage in the sense of St. Paul, *That we and all creatures live and move and have our being in God*; and then it will be seen to be the most logical support of all that had preceded. For the poet having, as we say, laboured through his epistle to prove, that every thing in the Universe tends, by a foreseen contrivance, and a present direction of all its parts, to the perfection of the whole: it might be objected, that such a disposition of things implying in God a painful, operose, and inconceivable extent of Providence, it could not be supposed that such care extended to *all*, but was confined to the more noble parts of the creation. This gross conception of the First Cause the poet exposes; by shewing that God is equally and intimately present to every particle of Matter, to every sort of Substance, and in every instant of Being.

VER. 278. *As the rapt Seraph, &c.* Alluding to the name *Seraphim*, signifying burners.



X. Cease then, nor ORDER Imperfection name:  
Our proper blifs depends on what we blame,  
Know thy own point: This kind, this due degree  
Of blindness, weaknefs, Heav'n bettows on thee.

#### VARIATIONS.

After v. 282. in the MS.

Reason, to think of God when she pretends,  
Begins a Cenfor, an Adorer ends.

#### COMMENTARY.

VER. 281. *Cease then, nor Order Imperfection name:)* And now the poet, as he had promised, having vindicated the ways of God to Man, concludes (from v. 280 to the end) that, from what had been said, it appears, that the very things we blame, contribute to our Happiness, either as Particulars, or as Parts of the Universal system; that our State of Ignorance was allotted to us out of compassion: that yet we have as much Knowledge as is sufficient to shew us that we are, and always shall be, as blest as we can bear; for that NATURE is neither a Straggling chain of blind Causes and Effects;

(All Nature is but Art, unknown to thee)  
nor yet the fortuitous result of Epicurean Atoms,

(All Chance. Direction, which thou canst not see)  
as those two species of atheism supposed it; but the wonderful Art and Direction, unknown indeed to Man; of an all-powerful, all-wise, all-good, and free Being. And therefore; we may be assured, that the arguments, brought above, to prove partial moral Evil productive of universal Good, are conclusive; from whence one certain truth results, in spite of all the pride and cavils of vain Reason, That WHATEVER IS, IS RIGHT.

That the reader may see in one view the Exactness of the Method, as well as Force of the Argument, I shall here draw up a short synopsis of this Epistle. The poet begins by telling us his subject is an Essay on Man: That his end of writing is to vindicate Providence: That he intends to derive his arguments, from the visible things of God seen in this system: Lays



Submit. --- In this, or any other sphere,      285  
 Secure to be as blest as thou canst bear:  
 Safe in the hand of one disposing Pow'r,  
 Or in the natal, or the mortal hour.

## COMMENTARY.

down this Proposition, *That of all possible Systems infinite Wisdom has form'd the best*: draws from thence two Consequences,  
 1. *That there must needs be somewhere such a creature as Man*;  
 2. *That the moral Evil which he is author of, is productive of the Good of the Whole.* This is his general Thesis; from whence he forms this Conclusion, *That Man should rest submissive and content, and make the hopes of Futurity his comfort: but not suffer this to be the occasion of PRIDE, which is the cause of all his impious complaints.*

He proceeds to confirm his Thesis. — Previously endeavours to abate our wonder at the phenomenon of *moral Evil*; shews, first, its *Use to the Perfection of the Universe*, by Analogy, from the use of *physical Evil* in this particular system. — Secondly, its *use in this system*, where it is turned, providentially, from its natural bias, to promote Virtue. Then goes on to vindicate Providence from the imputation of certain *supposed natural Evils*; as he had before justified it for the Permission of *real moral Evil*, in shewing that, though the atheist's complaint against Providence be on pretence of *real moral Evil*, yet the true cause is his impatience under *imaginary natural Evil*; the issue of a *depraved appetite for fantastical advantages*, which, if obtained, would be *useless or hurtful to Man*, and deforming and destructive to the Universe, as breaking into that Order by which it is supported. — He describes that Order, *Harmony, and close Connection of the Parts*; and, by shewing the intimate presence of God to his whole creation, gives a reason for an Universe so amazingly beautiful and perfect. From all this he deduces his general Conclusion, *That Nature being neither a blind chain of Causes and Effects nor yet the fortuitous result of wandering atoms, but the wonderful Art and Direction of an all-wise, all-good, and free Being; WHATEVER IS, IS RIGHT, with regard to the Disposition of God, and its Ultimate Tendency: which once granted, all complaints against Providence are at an end.*

All Nature is but Art, unknown to thee;  
 All Chance, Direction, which thou canst not see;  
 All Discord, Harmony not understood: 291

## NOTES.

VER. 294. *One truth is clear, &c.*) It will be hard to think any caviller should have objected to this conclusion, especially when the author, in this very epistle, has himself thus explained it;

Respecting Man, whatever wrong we call,  
*May, must* be right, as relative to ALL —  
 So Man, who here seems *principal* alone,  
 Perhaps acts *second* to some sphere unknown;  
 Touches some wheel, or verges to some goal:  
 'Tis but a part we see, and not a whole.

But without any regard to the evidence of this illustration, there is one who exclaims: „See the general conclusion, *All that is, is right*. So that at the sight of Charles the first losing his head on the scaffold, we must have said *this is right*; at the sight too of his judges condemning him, we must have said *this is right*; at the sight of some of these judges, taken and condemned for the action which he had owned to be right, we must have cried out *this is doubly right*. „ Never was any thing more amazing than that the absurdities arising from the sense in which this critic takes the grand principle, of *whatever is, is right*, did not shew him his mistake: For could any one in his senses employ a proposition in a meaning from whence such evident absurdities *immediately* arise? I have observed, that this conclusion, *whatever is, is right*, is a consequence of these premises, that *partial Evil tends to universal Good*; which the Author employs as a principle to humble the pride of Man, who would impiously make God accountable for his creation. What then does common sense teach us to understand by *whatever is, is right*? Did the poet mean right with regard to Man, or right with regard to God; right with regard to itself, or right with regard to its ultimate tendency? Surely WITH REGARD TO GOD; for he tells us his design is to *vindicate the ways of God to Man*. Surely,

All partial Evil, universal Good:  
And, spite of Pride, in erring Reason's spite,  
One truth is clear, **WHATEVER IS, IS RIGHT.**

## NOTES.

with regard to its **ULTIMATE TENDENCY**; for he tells us again, *all partial ill is universal good*, v. 291. Now is this any encouragement to Vice? Or does it take off from the crime of him who commits it, that God providentially produces Good out of Evil? Had Mr. Pope abruptly said in his conclusion, *the result of all is, that whatever is, is right*, the objector had even then been inexcusable for putting so absurd a sense upon the words, when he might have seen that it was a conclusion from the general principle above mentioned; and therefore must necessarily have another meaning. But what must we think of him, when the poet, to prevent mistakes, had delivered, in this very place, the principle itself, together with this conclusion as the consequence of it.

All Discord, Harmony not understood;

All partial Evil, universal Good:

And, spite of Pride, in erring Reason's spite,

One truth is clear, „Whatever is, is Right.,,

He could not have told his reader plainer that this conclusion was the consequence of that principle, unless he had written **THEREFORE** in great Church letters.



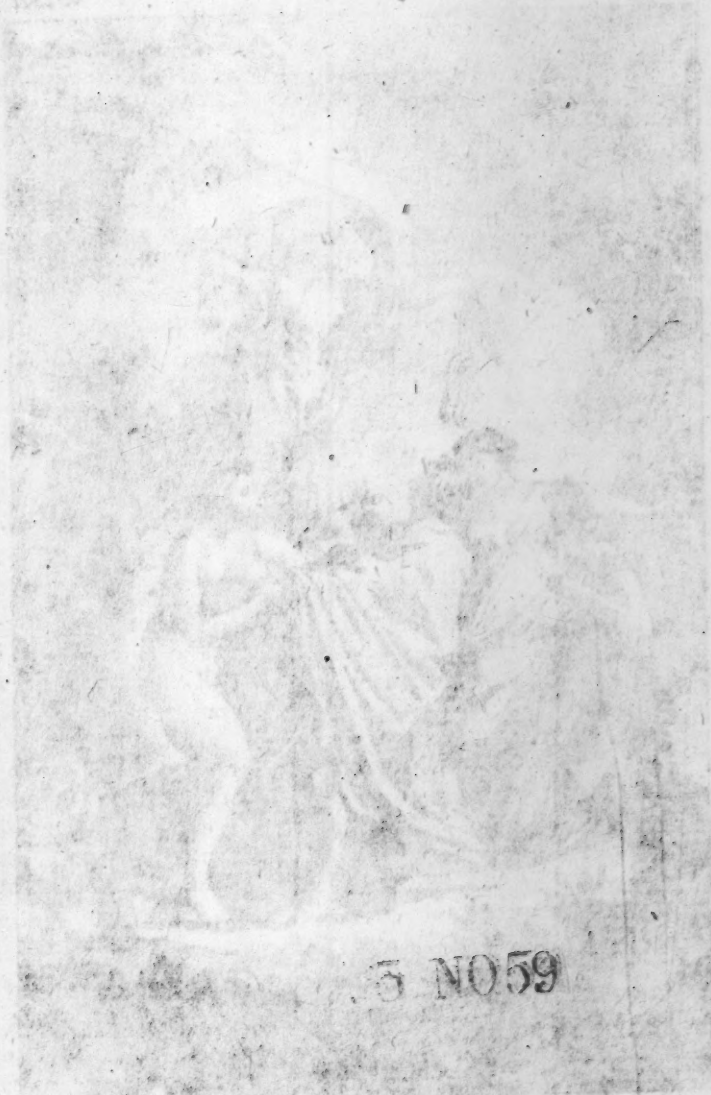
# A R G U M E N T OF E P I S T L E II.

*Of the Nature and State of Man with respect to  
Himself, as an Individual.*

I. *THE business of Man not to pry into God, but to study himself. His Middle Nature; his Powers and Frailties, v. 1 to 19. The Limits of his Capacity, v. 19, &c. II. The two Principles of Man, Self-love and Reason, both necessary, v. 53, &c. Self-love the stronger, and why, v. 67, &c. Their end the same, v. 81, &c. III. The PASSIONS, and their use, v. 93 to 130. The Predominant Passion, and its force, v. 132 to 160. Its Necessity, in directing Men to different purposes, v. 165, &c. Its providential Use, in fixing our Principle, and ascertaining our Virtue, v. 177. IV. Virtue and Vice joined in our mixed Nature; the limits near, yet the things separate and evident: What is the Office of Reason. v. 202 to 216. V. How odious Vice in itself, and how we deceive ourselves into it, v. 217. VI. That, however, the Ends of Providence and general Good are answered in our Passions and Imperfections, v. 238, &c. How usefully are distributed to all Orders of Men, v. 241. How useful they are to Society, v. 251. And to the Individuals, v. 263. In every State, and every age of life, v. 273. &c.*



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Self-Love still stronger, as its Objects nigh,  
 Reason's at distance and in Prospect lie,  
 That sees immediate Good by Present Sense,  
 Reason the future, and the Consequence  
*Ep: on Man Ep II.*

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## EPISTLE II.

## I.

**K**NOW then thyself, presume not to God to scan,  
 The proper study of Mankind is Man.  
 Plac'd on this isthmus of a middle state,  
 A Being darkly wise, and rudely great :

## VARIATIONS.

VER. 2. Ed. 1st.

The only science of Mankind is Man.

## COMMENTARY.

VER. 2. *The proper study, &c.*) The poet having shewn, in the first epistle, that the *ways of God* are too high for our comprehension, rightly draws this conclusion; and methodically makes it the subject of his introduction to the *second*, which treats of the *Nature of Man*.

But here presently the accusers of Providence would be apt to object, and say, Admit that we had run into an excess, while we pretended to censure or penetrate the designs of Providence, a matter indeed too high for us; yet have not you gone as far into the opposite extreme, while you only send us to the

## NOTES.

VER. 3. *Plac'd on this Isthmus, &c.*) As the poet hath given us this description of man for the very contrary purpose to which *Sceptics* are wont to employ such kind of paintings, namely, not to deter men from the *search*, but to excite them to the *discovery* of truth; he hath, with great judgement, represented Man as doubting and wavering between the *right* and *wrong* object; from which state there are great hopes he may be relieved by a careful and circumspect use of Reason. On the contrary, had he supposed Man so blind as to be busied in chusing,

With too much knowledge for the Sceptic side, 5  
 With too much weakness for the Stoic's pride,  
 He hangs between; in doubt to act, or rest;  
 In doubt to deem himself a God, or Beast;  
 In doubt his Mind or Body to prefer;

## COMMENTARY.

knowledge of our own Nature: You must mock us when you talk of this as a study; for who can doubt but we are intimately acquainted with OURSELVES? The proper conclusion therefore from your proof of our inability to comprehend the ways of God, is, that we should turn ourselves to the study of the frame of NATURE. Thus, I say, would they be apt to object; for, of all Men, those who call themselves *Free thinkers* are most given up to *Pride*; especially that kind of it, which consists in a boasted knowledge of their own nature, the effects of which are so well exposed in the *first* Epistle. The poet, therefore, to convince them that this study is less easy than they imagine, replies (from v 2 to 19.) to the *first* part of the objection, by describing the dark and feeble state of the human Understanding, with regard to the knowledge of ourselves. And further, to strengthen this argument, he shews, in answer to the *second* part of the objection (from v 18 to 31.) that the highest advances in *natural knowledge* may be easily acquired, and yet we, all the while, continue very ignorant of *ourselves*. For that neither the clearest science, which results from the Newtonian philosophy, nor the most sublime, which is taught by the Platonic, will at all assist us in this self-study; nay, what is more, that Religion itself, when grown fanatical and enthusiastic, will be equally useless: Though pure and sober Religion will best instruct us in Man's Nature, that knowledge being essential to Religion, whose subject is Man considered in all his relations; and, consequently, whose object is God.

## NOTES.

or doubtful in his choice, between two objects *equally wrong*, the case had appeared desperate, and all study of *Man* had been effectually discouraged. But his Translator, M. De Zesnel, not seeing the reason and beauty of this conduct, hath run into the

Born but to die, and reas'ning but to err;      10  
Alike in ignorance, his reason such,

NOTES.

very absurdity which, I have here shewn, Mr. Pope so artfully avoided. Of which, the learned Reader may take the following examples. The Poet says,

Man acts between; in doubt to *act*, or *rest*.  
Now he tells us 'tis Man's duty to *act*; not *rest*, as the Stoics thought; and, to this their principle the latter word alludes, whose Virtue, as he says afterwards, is

— Fix'd as in a Frost,

Contracted all, retiring to the breast:

But strength of mind is EXERCISE not REST.

Now hear the Translator, who is not for mincing matters,

Seroit-il en naissant au travail condamné?

Aux douceurs du repos seroit-il destiné?

and these are both wrong. for man is neither condemned to slavish Toil and Labour, nor yet indulged in the Luxury of repose. Again, the Poet, in a beautiful allusion to Scripture sentiments, breaks out into this just and moral reflection on man's condition here,

Born but to die, and reas'ning but to err.

The Translator turns this fine and sober thought into the most outrageous Scepticism;

Ce n'est que pour mourir, qu'il est né, qu'il respire,

Et toute sa raison n'est presque qu'un delire.

and so makes his Author directly contradict himself, where he says of Man, that he hath

— too much knowledge for the Sceptic side,

VER. 10. *Born but to die, &c.*) The author's meaning is, that, as we are *born to die*, and yet enjoy some small portion of life; so; though we *reason to err*, yet we comprehend some few truths. This is the weak state of Reason, in which Error mixes itself with all its true conclusions concerning Man's Nature.

VER. 11. *Alike in ignorance, &c.*) i. e. The proper sphere of his Reason is so narrow, and the exercise of it so nice, that the too immoderate use of it is attended with the same ignorance that proceeds from the not using it at all. Yet, tho' in



Whether he thinks too little, or too much:  
 Chaos of Thought and Passion, all confus'd;  
 Still by himself abus'd, or disabus'd;  
 Created half to rise, and half to fall; 15  
 Great lord of all things, yet a prey to all;  
 Sole judge of Truth, in endless Error hurl'd:  
 The glory, jest, and riddle of the world!

## NOTES.

both these cases, he is *abused by himself*, he has it still in his own power to *disabuse himself*, in making his passions subservient to the *means*, and regulating his Reason by the *end* of Life.

VER. 12. *Whether he thinks too little, or too much:*) This is so true, that ignorance arises as well from pushing our enquiries too far, as from not carrying them far enough, that we may observe; when Speculations, even in Science, are carried beyond a certain point; that point, where use is reasonably supposed to end, and mere curiosity to begin; they conclude in the most extravagant and senseless inferences; such as the unreality of matter; the reality of space; the servility of the Will, &c. The reason of this sudden fall out of full light into utter darkness appears not to result from the natural condition of things, but to be the arbitrary decree of infinite wisdom and goodness, which imposed a barrier to the extravagances of its giddy lawless creature, always inclined to pursue truths of less importance too far, to the neglect of those more necessary for his improvement in his station here.

VER. 17. *Sole judge of Truth, in endless Error hurl'd:*) Some have imagined that the author, by, *in endless error hurl'd*, meant, *cast into endless error*, or *into the regions of endless error*, and therefore have taken notice of it as an incongruity of speech. But they neither understood the poet's language, nor his sense: to *hurl* and *cast* are not synonymous; but related only as the genus and species; for to *hurl* signifies, not simply to *cast*, but to *cast backward and forward*, and is taken from the rural game called *hurling*. So that, *into endless error hurl'd*, as these critics would have it, would have been a barbarism. His words therefore signify,  *tossed about in endless error*: and this he intended they should signify, as appears from the antithesis, *sole judge of*



Go, wond'rous creature! mount where Science guides,  
Go, measure earth, weigh air, and state the tides; 20  
Instruct the planets in what orbs to run,

VARIATIONS.

After v. 18. in the MS.

For more perfection than this state can bear  
In vain we sigh, Heav'n made us as we are.  
As wisely sure a modest Ape might aim  
To be like Man, whose faculties and frame  
He sees, he feels, as you or I to be  
An Angel thing we neither know nor see.  
Observe how near he edges on our race;  
What human tricks! how risible of face!  
It must be so — why else have I the sense  
Of more than monkey charms and excellence?  
Why else to walk on two so oft essay'd?  
And why this ardent longing for a maid?  
So Pug might plead, and call his Gods unkind  
Till set on end and married to his mind.  
Go, reasoning Thing! assume the Doctor's chair,  
As Plato deep, as Seneca severe:  
Fix moral fitness, and to God give rule,  
Then drop into thyself, &c. —

VER. 21, Ed. 4th and 5th.

Show by what rules the wand'ring planets stray,  
Correct old Time, and teach the Sun his Way.

NOTES.

*truth.* So that the sense of the whole is, — „Tho', as sole judge  
„of truth, he is now fixed and stable; yet, as involved in  
„endless error, he is now again hurl'd, or tossed up and down  
„in it.” This shews us how cautious we ought to be in censur-  
ing the expressions of a writer, one of whose characteristic qua-  
lities was correctness of expression and propriety of sentiment.

VER. 20. *Go, measure earth, &c.* Alluding to the noble  
and useful project of the modern Mathematicians, to measure a  
degree at the equator and the polar circle, in order to deter-  
mine the true figure of the earth; of great importance to astro-  
nomy and navigation.

Correct old Time, and regulate the Sun;  
 Go, soar with Plato to th' empyreal sphere,  
 To the first good, first perfect, and first fair;  
 Or tread the mazy round his follow'rs trod, 25  
 And quitting sense call imitating God;  
 As Eastern priests in giddy circles run,  
 And turn their heads to imitate the Sun.  
 Go, teach Eternal Wisdom how to rule ---  
 Then drop into thyself, and be a fool! 30  
 Superior beings, when of late they saw  
 A mortal Man unfold all Nature's law,

## COMMENTARY.

VER. 31. *Superior beings, &c.*) To give this second argument its full force, he illustrates it (from v. 30 to 43.) by the noblest example that ever was in science, the incomparable NEWTON; who, although he penetrated so far beyond others into the works of GOD, yet could go no further in the knowledge

## NOTES.

VER. 22. *Correct old Time,*) This alludes to Sir Isaac Newton's Grecian Chronology, which he reformed on those two sublime conceptions, the difference between the reigns of kings, and the generations of men; and the position of the colures of the equinoxes and solstices at the time of the Argonautic expedition.

VER. 29, 30. *Go, teach Eternal Wisdom, &c.*) These two lines are a conclusion from all that had been said from v. 18, to this effect: Go now, vain Man, elated with thy acquirements in *real* science, and *imaginary* intimacy with God; go, and run into all the extravagancies I have exploded in the first epistle, where thou pretendest to teach Providence how to govern; then drop into the obscurities of thy own nature, and thereby manifest thy ignorance and folly.

VER. 31. *Superior beings, &c.*) In these lines he speaks to this effect: But to make you fully sensible of the difficulty of

Admir'd such wisdom in an earthly shape,  
And shew'd a NEWTON as we shew an Ape.

## COMMENTARY.

of his own nature than the generality of his fellows. Of which the poet assigns this very just and adequate reason: In all *other sciences* the Understanding is unchecked and uncontrouled by any opposite principle, but in the science of *Man*, the Passions overturn as fast as Reason can build up.

## NOTES.

this study, I shall instance in the great Newton himself; whom, when superior beings, not long since, saw capable of unfolding the whole law of Nature, they were in doubt whether the owner of such prodigious sagacity should not be reckoned of their own order; just as men, when they see the surprizing marks of Reason in an Ape, are almost tempted to rank him with their own kind. And yet this wondrous Man could go no further in the knowledge of himself than the generality of his species. In which we see it was not Mr. Pope's intention to bring any of the Ape's *qualities*, but its *sagacity*, into the comparison. But why the *Ape's*, it may be said, rather than the sagacity of some more decent animal, particularly the *half-reasoning elephant*, as the poet calls it; which, as well on account of this its superiority, as for its having no ridiculous side, like the Ape, on which it could be viewed, seems better to have deserved this honour? I reply, Because, as none but a shape *resembling human*, accompanied with great sagacity, could occasion the *doubt* of that animal's relation to Man, the Ape only having that resemblance, no other animal was fitted for the comparison. And on this ground of relation the whole beauty of the thought depends; Newton and those superior spirits being equally framed for immortality, though of different orders. And here let me take notice of a new species of the Sublime, of which our poet may be justly said to be the maker; so new, that we have yet no name for it, though of a nature distinct from every other poetical excellence. The two great perfections of works of genius are Wit and Sublimity. Many writers have been witty, several

Could he, whose rules the rapid Comet bind, 35  
 Describe or fix one movement of his Mind?  
 Who saw its fires here rise, and there descend,  
 Explain his own beginning, or his end?  
 Alas what wonder! Man's superior part  
 Uncheck'd may rise, and climb from art to art; 40  
 But when his own great work is but begun,  
 What Reason weaves, by Passion is undone.  
 Trace Science then, with Modesty thy guide;  
 First strip off all her equipage of Pride;

## VARIATIONS.

VER. 35. Ed. 1st.

Could he, who taught each Planet where to roll,  
 Describe or fix one movement of the Soul?  
 Who mark'd their points to rise or to descend,  
 Explain his own beginning or his end?

## COMMENTARY.

VER. 43. *Trace Science then, &c.*) The conclusion, therefore, from the whole is (from v. 42 to 53.) that, as on the one hand, we should persist in the study of Nature; so, on the other, in order to arrive at Science, we should proceed in the simplicity of Truth; and the product, tho' small, will yet be real.

## NOTES.

have been sublime, and some few have even possessed both these qualities separately; but none that I know of, besides our Poet, hath had the art to incorporate them; of which he hath given many examples, both in this Essay and his other poems, one of the noblest being the passage in question. This seems to be the last effort of the imagination, to poetical perfection: and in this compounded excellence the Wit receives a dignity from the Sublime, and the Sublime a Splendor from the Wit; which, in their state of separate existence, they both wanted.

VER. 37. *Who saw its fires here rise, &c.*) Sir Isaac Newton, in calculating the velocity of a Comet's motion, and the course it describes, when it becomes visible in its descent to,



Deduct what is but Vanity, or Drefs,      45  
 Or Learning's Luxury, or Idleness;  
 Or tricks to shew the stretch of human brain,  
 Mere curious pleasure, or ingenious pain;

## NOTES.

and ascent from the Sun, conjectured, with the highest appearance of truth, that Comets revolve perpetually round the Sun, in ellipses vastly eccentric, and very nearly approaching to parabolas. In which he was greatly confirmed, in observing between two Comets a coincidence in their perihelions, and a perfect agreement in their velocities.

VER. 45. — *Vanity, or drefs;*) These are the first parts of what the Poet, in the preceding line, calls the scholar's *equipage of Pride*. By *vanity*, is meant that luxuriancy of thought and expression in which a writer indulges himself, to shew the fruitfulness of his fancy or invention. By *dress*, is to be understood a lower degree of that practice, in amplification of thought and ornamental expression, to give force to what the writer would convey: but even this, the poet, in a severe search after truth, condemns; and with great judgment. Conciseness of thought and simplicity of expression, being as well the best *instruments*, as the best *vehicles* of Truth. *Shakespear* touches upon this latter advantage with great force and humour. The Flatterer says to *Timon* in distress, „I cannot cover the monstrous bulk of their ingratitude with any *fixe of words*.„ The other replies, „Let it go *naked*, men may see't the better.„

VER. 46. *Or Learning's Luxury, or Idleness;*) The *Luxury of Learning* consists in dressing up and disguising old notions in a new way, so as to make them more fashionable and palatable; instead of examining and scrutinizing their truth. As this is often done for pomp and shew, it is called *luxury*; as it is often done too to save pains and labour, it is called *idleness*.

VER. 47. *Or tricks to shew the stretch of human brain;*) Such as the mathematical demonstrations concerning the *small quantity of matter*; the *endless divisibility* of it, &c.

VER. 48. *Mere curious pleasure, or ingenious pain;*) That is, when *Admiration* sets the mind on the rack.



Expunge the whole, or lop th' excrescent parts  
 Of all our Vices have created Arts; 50  
 Then see how little the remaining sum,  
 Which serv'd the past, and must the times to come!

II. Two Principles in human nature reign;  
 Self-love, to urge, and Reason, to restrain;  
 Nor this a good, nor that a bad we call, 59

## COMMENTARY.

VER. 53. *Two Principles, &c.*) The poet having thus shewn the difficulty attending the study of Man, proceeds to remove it, by laying before us the elements or true principles of this science, in an account of the *Origin, Use, and End* of the PASSIONS; which, in my opinion, contains the truest, clearest, shortest, and consequently the best system of Ethics that is any where to be met with. He begins (from v. 52 to 59.) with pointing out the two grand principles in human nature, SELF-LOVE and REASON. Describes their general nature: The first sets Man upon acting, the other regulates his action. However, these principles are *natural*, not *moral*; and, therefore, in themselves, neither good nor bad, but so only as they are directed. This observation is made with great judgment, in opposition to the desperate folly of those fanatics, who, as the Ascetic, pretend to eradicate Self-love; as the Mystic, would stifle Reason; and both, on the absurd fancy of their being moral, not natural principles.

VER. 59. *Self-love, the spring of motion, acts the soul;*) The poet proceeds (from v. 58 to 67.) more minutely to mark out the distinct offices of these two principles, which he had before assigned only in general; and here he shews their necessity; for without Self-love, as the *spring*, Man would be unactive; and without Reason, as the *balance*, active to no purpose.

## NOTES.

VER. 49. *Expunge the whole, or lop th' excrescent parts.* — Of all our vices have created Arts; i. e. Those parts of natural Philosophy, Logic, Rhetoric, Poetry, &c. that administer to luxury, deceit, ambition, effeminacy, &c.

Each works its end, to move or govern all:  
 And to their proper operation still,  
 Ascribe all Good, to their improper Ill.

Self-love, the spring of motion, acts the soul;  
 Reason's comparing balance rules the whole.      60  
 Man, but for that, no action could attend,  
 And, but for this, were active to no end:  
 Fix'd like a plant on his peculiar spot;  
 To draw nutrition, propagate, and rot;  
 Or, meteor-like, flame lawless thro' the void,      65  
 Destroying others, by himself destroy'd.

Most strength the moving principle requires;  
 Active its task, it prompts, impels, inspires,  
 Sedate and quiet, the comparing lies,  
 Form'd but to check, delib'rate, and advise.      70  
 Self-love still stronger, as its objects nigh;  
 Reason's at distance, and in prospect lie:  
 That sees immediate good by present sense;

## COMMENTARY.

VER. 67. *Most strength the moving principle requires;*) Having thus explained the ends and offices of each principle, he goes on (from v. 67 to 79.) to speak of their qualities; and shews how they are fitted to discharge those functions, and answer their respective intentions. The business of Self-love being to excite to action, it is quick and impetuous; and moving instinctively, has, like attraction, its force prodigiously increased as the object approaches, and proportionably lessened as that recedes. On the contrary, Reason, like the Author of attraction, is always calm and sedate, and equally preserves itself whether the object be near or far off. Hence the moving principle is made more strong, though the restraining be more quick-sighted. The consequence he draws from this is, that if we would not be carried away to our destruction, we must always keep Reason upon guard.

Reason, the future and the consequence.  
 Thicker than arguments, temptations throng, 75  
 At best more watchful this, but that more strong.  
 The action of the stronger to suspend  
 Reason still use, to Reason still attend.  
 Attention, habit and experience gains;  
 Each strengthens Reason, and Self-love restrains. 80  
 Let subtle schoolmen teach these friends to fight,  
 More studious to divide than to unite;

## COMMENTARY.

VER. 79. *Attention, &c.*) But it would be objected, that, if this account were true, human life would be most miserable; and, even in the wisest, a perpetual conflict between Reason and the Passions. To this, therefore, the poet replies (from v. 78 to 81.) first, that Providence has so graciously contrived, that even in the voluntary exercise of Reason, as in the mere mechanic motion of a limb, Habit makes what was at first done with pain, easy and natural. And, secondly, that the experience gained by the long exercise of Reason, goes a great way towards eluding the force of Self-love. Now the attending to Reason, as here recommended, will gain us this habit and experience. Hence it appears, that this station, in which Reason is to be kept constantly upon guard, is not uneasy a one as may be at first imagined.

VER. 81. *Let subtle schoolmen, &c.*) From this description of Self-love and Reason it follows, as the poet observes (from v. 80 to 93.) that both conspire to one end, namely, human happiness, though they be not equally expert in the choice of the means; the difference being this, that the first hastily seizes every thing which had the appearance of good; the other weighs and examines whether it be indeed what it appears.

## NOTES.

VER. 74. *Reason, the future and the consequence.*) i. e. By experience Reason collects the future; and by argumentation, the consequence.

And Grace and Virtue, Sense and Reason split,  
 With all the rash dexterity of wit.  
 Wits, just like Fools, at war about a name,      85  
 Have full as oft no meaning, or the same.  
 Self-love and Reason to one end aspire,  
 Pain their aversion, Pleasure their desire;  
 But greedy That, its object would devour,  
 This taste the honey, and not wound the flower: 90  
 Pleasure, or wrong or rightly understood,  
 Our greatest evil, or our greatest good.

VARIATIONS.

After v. 86. in the MS.

Of good and evil Gods what frightened Fools,  
 Of good and evil Reason puzzled Schools,  
 Deceiv'd, deceiving, taught —

COMMENTARY

This shews, as he next observes, the folly of the schoolmen, who consider them as two opposite principles, the one good and the other evil. The observation is seasonable and judicious; for this dangerous school-opinion gives great support to the Manichæan or Zoroastrian error, the confutation of which was one of the author's chief ends in writing. For if there be *two principles* in Man, a *good* and *bad*, it is natural to think him the joint product of the two Manichæan deities (the first of which contributed to his *Reason*, the other to his *Passions*) rather than the creature of one Individual Cause. This was Plutarch's notion, and, as we may see in him, of the more ancient Manichæans. It was of importance, therefore, to reprobate and subvert a notion that served to the support of so dangerous an error; And this the poet has done with more force and clearness than is often to be found in whole volumes written against that heretical opinion.



III. Modes of Self-love the Passions we may call:  
 'This real good, or seeming, moves them all:  
 But since not ev'ry good we can divide, 95  
 And reason bids us for our own provide;  
 Passions, tho' selfish, if their means be fair,  
 List under Reason, and deserve her care;  
 Those, that imparted, court a nobler aim,  
 Exalt their kind, and take some Virtue's name. 100

In lazy Apathy let Stoics boast  
 Their Virtue fix'd; 'tis fix'd as in a frost;  
 Contracted all, retiring to the breast;  
 But strength of mind is Exercise, not Rest:  
 The rising tempest puts in act the soul, 105

## COMMENTARY.

VER. 93. *Modes of self-love, &c.*) Having given this account of the nature of Self-love in general, he comes now to anatomize it, in a discourse on the PASSIONS, which he aptly names the *modes* of Self-love. The object of all these, he shews (from v. 92 to 101.) is good; and, when under the guidance of Reason, real good, either of ourselves or of another; for some goods not being capable of division or communication, and Reason at the same time directing us to provide for ourselves, we therefore, in pursuit of these objects, sometimes aim at our own, good, sometimes at the good of others: when fairly aiming at our own, the quality is called *Prudence*; when at another's, *Virtue*.

Hence (as he shews from v. 100 to 105.) appears the folly of the Stoics, who would eradicate the Passions, things so necessary both to the good of the Individual and of the Kind. Which preposterous method of promoting Virtue he therefore very reasonably reproves.

VER. 105. *The rising tempest puts in act the soul,*) But as it was from observation of the evils occasioned by the Passions, that the Stoics thus extravagantly projected their extirpation, the poet recurs (from v. 104 to 111.) to his grand principle, so often

Parts it may ravage, but preserves the whole.  
 On life's vast ocean diversely we sail,  
 Reason the card, but passion is the gale ;  
 Nor God alone in the still calm we find,  
 He mounts the storm, and walks upon the wind. 110

VARIATIONS.

After v. 108. in the MS.

A tedious Voyage! where how useless lies  
 The compass, if no pow'rful gusts arise?

COMMENTARY.

before, and to so good purpose, insisted on, that *partial Ill is universal Good*; and shews, that though the tempest of the Passions, like that of the air, may tear and ravage some few parts of nature in its passage, yet the salutary agitation produced by it preserves the whole in life and vigour. This is his *first* argument against the Stoics, which he illustrates by a very beautiful similitude, on a hint taken from Scripture:

Nor God alone in the still calm we find,  
 He mounts the storm, and walks upon the wind.

NOTES.

VER. 109. *Nor God alone, &c.*) These words are only a simple affirmation in the poetic dress of a similitude, to this purpose: Good is not only produced by the subdual of the Passions, but by the turbulent exercise of them. A truth conveyed under the most sublime imagery that poetry could conceive or paint. For the author is here only shewing the providential issue of the Passions, and how, by God's gracious disposition, they are turned away from their natural byas, to promote the happiness of Mankind. As to the method in which they are to be treated by Man, in whom they are found, all that he contends for, in favour of them, is only this, that they should not be quite rooted up and destroyed, as the Stoics, and their followers in all religions, foolishly attempted. For the rest, he constantly repeats this advice,

The action of the stronger to suspend,  
 Reason still use, to Reason still attend.

Passions, like elements, tho' born to fight,  
 Yet, mix'd and soften'd, in his work unite :  
 These 'tis enough to temper and employ ;  
 But what composes Man, can Man destroy ?  
 Suffice that Reason keep to Nature's road, 115  
 Subject, compound them, follow her and God.  
 Love, Hope, and Joy, fair pleasure's smiling train,  
 Hate, Fear, and Grief, the family of pain,  
 These mix'd with art, and to due bounds confin'd,  
 Make and maintain the balance of the mind : 120  
 The lights and shades, whose well accorded strife  
 Gives all the strength and colour of our life.

## VARIATIONS.

After v. 112. in the MS.

The soft reward the virtuous, or invite ;  
 The fierce, the vicious punish or affright.

## COMMENTARY.

VER. III. *Passions, like Elements, &c.* His second argument against the Stoics (from v. 110 to 133.) is, that Passions go to the composition of a moral character, just as elementary particles go to the composition of an organized body : Therefore, for Man to project the destruction of what composes his very Being, is the height of extravagance. 'Tis true, he tells us, that these Passions, which, in their natural state, like elements, are in perpetual jar, must be tempered, softened, and united, in order to perfect the work of the great plastic Artist ; who, in this office, employs human Reason ; whose business it is to follow the road of Nature, and to observe the dictates of the Deity ; *Follow her and God.* The use and importance of this precept is evident : For in doing the first, she will discover the absurdity of attempting to eradicate the Passions ; in doing the second, she will learn how to make them subservient to the interests of Virtue.

Pleasures are ever in our hands or eyes;  
 And when, in act, they cease, in prospect, rise:  
 Present to grasp, and future still to find,      125  
 The whole employ of body and of mind.  
 All spread their charms, but charm not all alike;

## COMMENTARY.

VER. 123. *Pleasures are ever in our hands or eyes;*) His third argument against the Stoics (from v. 122 to 127.) is, that the Passions are a continual spur to the pursuit of Happiness; which, without these powerful inciters, we should neglect, and sink into a senseless indolence. Now Happiness is the end of our creation; and this excitement the means of Happiness; therefore, these movers, the Passions, are the instruments of God, which he hath put into the hands of Reason to work withal.

VER. 127. *All spread their charms, &c.*) The poet now proceeds in his subject; and this last observation leads him naturally to the discussion of his next principle. He shews then, that though all the Passions have their turn in swaying the determinations of the mind, yet every Man hath one MASTER PASSION that at length stifles or absorbs all the rest. The fact he illustrates at large in his epistle to Lord Cobham. Here (from v. 126 to 149.) he giveth us the cause of it. Those pleasures or Goods, which are the objects of the Passions, affect the mind by striking on the senses; but, as through the formation of the organs of our frame, every man hath some one sense stronger and more acute than others, the object which strikes that stronger or acuter sense; whatever it be, will be the object most desired; and consequently, the pursuit of that will be the *ruling Passion*. That the difference of force in this ruling Passion shall, at first, perhaps, be very small or even imperceptible; but Nature, Habit, Imagination, Wit, nay even Reason itself shall assist its growth, 'till it hath at length drawn and converted every other into itself. All which is delivered in a strain of Poetry so wonderfully sublime, as suspends, for a while, the *ruling passion*, in every Reader, and engrosses his whole Admiration.

This naturally leads the poet to lament the weakness and insufficiency of human Reason (from v. 148 to 161.) and the purpose he had in so doing, was plainly to intimate necessity of a more perfect dispensation to Mankind.



On different senses different objects strike;  
 Hence different Passions more or less inflame,  
 As strong or weak, the organs of the frame; 130  
 And hence one MASTER PASSION in the breast,  
 Like Aaron's serpent, swallows up the rest.

As Man, perhaps, the moment of his breath,  
 Receives the lurking principle of death;  
 The young disease, that must subdue at length, 135  
 Grows with his growth, and strengthens with his strength:  
 So, cast and mingled with his very frame,  
 The Mind's disease, its RULING PASSION came;  
 Each vital humour which should feed the whole,  
 Soon flows to this, in body and in soul: 140  
 Whatever warms the heart, or fills the head,  
 As the mind opens, and its functions spread,  
 Imagination plies her dang'rous art,  
 And pours it all upon the peccant part.

Nature its mother, Habit is its nurse; 145  
 Wit, Spirit, Faculties, but make it worse;  
 Reason itself but gives it edge and pow'r;  
 As Heav'n's blest beam turns vinegar more sow'r.

## NOTES

VER. 133. *As Man perhaps, &c.*) „Antipater Sidonius Poeta „omnibus annis uno die natali tantum corripiebatur febre, & eo „consumptus est satis longa senecta., *Plin.* l. vii. N. H. This *Antipater* was in the times of Crassus, and is celebrated for the quickness of his parts by Cicero.

VER. 147. *Reason itself, &c.*) The poet, in some other of his epistles, gives examples of the doctrine and precepts here delivered. Thus, in that *Of the use of Riches*, he has illustrated this truth in the Character of Cotta:

Old Cotta sham'd his fortune and his birth,  
 Yet was not Cotta void of wit or worth.

We, wretched subjects tho' to lawful sway,  
 In this weak queen, some fav'rite still obey:      150  
 Ah! if she lend not arms, as well as rules;  
 What can she more than tell us we are fools?  
 Teach us to mourn our Nature, not to mend,  
 A sharp accuser, but a helpless friend!  
 Or from a judge turn pleader, to persuade      155  
 The choice we make, or justify it made;  
 Proud of an easy conquest all along,  
 She but removes weak passions for the strong:  
 So, when small humours gather to a gout,  
 The doctor fancies he has driv'n them out.      160  
 Yes, Nature's road must ever be prefer'd;  
 Reason is here no-guide, but still a guard;

## COMMENTARY

VER. 161. *Yes, Nature's road &c.* Now as it appears, from the account here given of the *ruling Passion* and its cause which results from the structure of the organs, that it is the road of Nature, the poet shews (from v. 160 to 167.) that this road is to be followed. So that the office of Reason is not to direct us what Passion to exercise, but to assist us in RECTIFYING, and keeping within due bounds, that which Nature hath so strongly impressed; because

A mightier Pow'r the strong direction sends,  
 And sev'ral Men impels to sev'ral ends.

## NOTES.

What tho' (the use of barb'rous spits forgot)  
 His kitchen vy'd in coolness with his groat?  
 If Corta liv'd on pulse, it was no more  
 Than bramins, saints, and sages did before.

VER. 149. *We, wretched Subjects &c.* St. Paul himself did not chuse to employ other arguments, when disposed to give us the highest idea of the usefulness of Christianity (*Rom. vii.*) But,

'Tis hers to rectify, not overthrow,  
 And treat this passion more as friend than foe:  
 A mightier Pow'r the strong direction sends, 165  
 And sev'ral Men impels to sev'ral ends:  
 Like varying winds by other passions tost,

## COMMENTARY.

VER. 167. *Like varying winds, &c.*) The poet having proved that the *ruling passion* (since Nature hath given it us) is not to be overthrown, but *rectified*, the next inquiry will be of what *use* the ruling Passion is; for an use it must have, if reason be to treat it thus mildly. This use he shews us (from v. 166 to 197.) is twofold, Natural and Moral.

I. Its *Natural* use is to conduct Men steadily to one certain end; who would otherwise be eternally fluctuating between the

## NOTES.

it may be, the poet finds a remedy in Natural Religion. Far from it. He here leaves reason unrelieved. What is this then, but an intimation that we ought to seek for a cure in that religion, which only dares profess to give it?

VER. 163. *'Tis hers to rectify, &c.*) The meaning of this precept is, That as the ruling Passion is implanted by Nature, it is Reason's office to regulate, direct, and restrain, but not to overthrow it. To regulate the passion of Avarice, for instance, into a parsimonious dispensation of the public revenues: to direct the passion of Love, whose object is worth and beauty,

To the first good, first perfect, and first fair, *το καλὸν τ' ἀγαθόν*, as his master Plato advises; and to restrain Spleen to a contempt and hatred of Vice. This is what the poet meant, and what every unprejudiced man could not but see he must needs mean, by RECTIFYING THE MASTER PASSION, though he had not confined us to this sense, in the reason he gives of his precept, in these words:

And mightier Pow'r the strong direction sends,

And sev'ral Men impels to sev'ral ends.

For what ends are they which God impels to, but the ends of Virtue?

This drives them constant to a certain coast.  
 Let pow'r or knowledge, gold or glory, please,  
 Or (oft more strong than all) the love of ease;  
 Thro' life 'tis follow'd, ev'n at life's expence; 171  
 The merchant's toil, the sage's indolence,  
 The monk's humility, the hero's pride,  
 All, all alike, find Reason on their side.  
 Th' Eternal Art educing good from ill, 175  
 Grafts on this Passion our best principle:  
 'Tis thus the Mercury of Man is fix'd,  
 Strong grows the Virtue with his nature mix'd;  
 The dross cements what else were too refin'd,  
 And in one int'rest body acts with mind. 180  
 As fruits, ungrateful to the planter's care!  
 On savage-Socks inserted, learn to bear;  
 The surest Virtues thus from Passions shoor,  
 Wild Nature's vigor working at the root.  
 What crops of wit and honesty appear 185

COMMENTARY.

equal violence of various and discordant passions, driving them up and down at random; and, by that means, to enable them to promote the good of Society, by making each a contributor to the common stock:

Let pow'r or knowledge, gold or glory, please, &c.

2. Its *Moral* use is to ingraft our ruling Virtue upon it; and by that means to enable us to promote our own good, by turning the exorbitancy of the *ruling passion* into its neighbouring Virtue:

See anger, zeal and fortitude supply; &c.

The Wisdom of the divine Artist is, as the poet finely observes, very illustrious in this contrivance; for the mind and body having now one common interest, the efforts of Virtue will have their force infinitely augmented:

'Tis thus the Mercury, &c.



From spleen, from obstinacy, hate, or fear!  
 See anger, zeal and fortitude supply;  
 Ev'n av'rice, prudence; sloth, philosophy;  
 Lust, thro' some certain strainers well refin'd,  
 Is gentle love, and charms all womankind; 190  
 Envy, to which th'ignoble mind's a slave,  
 Is emulation in the learn'd or brave;  
 Nor Virtue, male or female, can we name,  
 But what will grow on Pride, or grow on Shame.  
 Thus Nature gives us (let it check our pride)  
 The virtue nearest to our vice ally'd; 196  
 Reason the byas turns to good from ill,

## VARIATIONS.

After v. 194. in the MS.

How oft, with Passion, Virtue points her Charms!  
 Then shines the Hero, then the Patriot warms.  
 Peleus' great Son, or Brutus, who had known,  
 Had Lucrece been a Whore, or Helen none?  
 But Virtues opposite to make agree,  
 That, Reason! is, thy task; and worthy Thee.  
 Hard task, cries Bibulus, and reason weak.  
 — Make it a point, dear Marquess! or a pique.  
 Once, for a whim, persuade yourself to pay  
 A debt to reason, like a debt at play.  
 For right or wrong have mortals suffer'd more?  
 B — for his Prince, or \* \* for his Whore?  
 Whose self-denials nature most controul?  
 His, who would save a Sixpence or his Soul?  
 Web for his health, a Chartreux for his Sin,  
 Contend they not which soonest shall grow thin?  
 What we resolve, we can: but here's the fault,  
 We ne'er resolve to do the thing we ought.

## COMMENTARY.

VER. 197. *Reason the byas, &c.*) But lest it should be objected that this account favours the doctrine of Necessity, and

And Nero reigns a Titus, if he will.  
 The fiery soul abhor'd in Catiline,  
 In Decius charms, in Curtius is divine:      200  
 The same ambition can destroy or save,  
 And makes a patriot as it makes a knave,  
 This light and darkness in our chaos join'd,  
 What shall divide? The God within the mind.

## COMMENTARY.

would insinuate that Men are only acted upon, in the production of Good out of Evil: the poet teacheth (from v. 196 to 203.) that Man is a free agent, and hath it in his own power to turn the natural passions into Virtues or into Vices, properly so called:

Reason the byass turns to good from ill,  
 And Nero reigns a Titus, if he will.

Secondly, if it should be objected, that though he doth indeed tell us some actions are beneficial and some hurtful, yet he could not call those *virtuous* nor these *vicious*, because, as he hath described things, the motive appears to be only the gratification of some passion; give me leave to answer for him, that this would be mistaking the argument, which (to v. 249 of this epistle) considers the passions only with regard to *Society*, that is, with regard to their *effects* rather than their *motives*. That however, 'tis his design to teach that actions are *properly virtuous and vicious*; and though it be difficult to distinguish genuine Virtue from spurious, they having both the same appearance, and both the same public effects, yet they may be disembarassed. If it be asked, by what means? He replies (from v. 202 to 205.) By Conscience; which is to the purpose; for it is solely a Man's own concern to know whether his Virtue be pure and solid; for what is it to *others*, whether this Virtue, while, as to them, the effects of it is the same, be real or unsubstantial?

## NOTES.

VER. 204. *The God within the mind.*) A Platonic phrase for Conscience; and here employed with great judgment and propriety. For Conscience either signifies, speculatively, the judg-

Extremes in Nature equal ends produce, 205  
 In Man they join to some mysterious use;  
 Tho' each by turns the other's bound invade,  
 As, in some well-wrought picture, light and shade,  
 And oft so mix, the diff'rence is too nice  
 Where ends the Virtue, or begins the Vice. 210

Fools! who from hence into the notion fall,  
 That Vice or Virtue there is none at all.  
 If white and black blend, soften, and unite

## COMMENTARY.

VER. 205. *Extremes in Nature equal ends produce,*) But still it will be said, why all this difficulty to distinguish true Virtue from false? The poet shews why (from v. 204 to 211.) That though indeed Vice and Virtue so invade each other's bounds, that sometimes we can scarce tell where one ends and the other begins, yet great purposes are served thereby, no less than the perfecting the constitution of the whole, as lights and shades, which run into one another in a well-wrought picture, make the harmony and spirit of the composition. But on this account to say there is neither Vice nor Virtue, the poet shews (from v. 210 to 217.) would be just as wise as to say there is neither black nor white; because the shade of that and the light of this often run into one another:

Ask your own heart, and nothing is so plain;

'Tis to mistake them, costs the time and pain.

This is an error of *speculation*, which leads Men so foolishly to conclude, that there is neither Vice nor Virtue.

## NOTES.

ment we pass of things upon whatever principles we chance to have: and then it is only Opinion, a very unable judge and divider. Or else it signifies, practically, the application of the eternal rule of right (received by us as the law of God) to the regulation of our actions, and then it is properly Conscience, *the God* (or the law of God) *within the mind*, of power to divide the light from the darkness in this chaos of the passions.

A thousand ways, is there no black or white?  
 Ask your own heart, and nothing is so plain; 215  
 'Tis to mistake them, costs the time and pain.

Vice is a monster of so frightful mien,  
 As, to be hated, needs but to be seen;  
 Yet seen too oft, familiar with her face,  
 We first endure, then pity, then embrace. 220  
 But where th' Extreme of Vice, was ne'er agreed:  
 Ask where's the North? at York, 'tis on the Tweed;  
 In Scotland, at the Orcaes; and there,  
 At Greenland, Zembla, or the Lord knows where.  
 No creature owns it in the first degree, 225  
 But thinks his neighbour further gone than he;

#### VARIATIONS.

After v. 220. in the 1st. Edition, followed these,  
 A Cheat! a Whore! who starts not at the name  
 In all the Inns of Court or Drury-lane?  
 After v. 226. in the MS.  
 The Col'nel swears the Agent is a dog,  
 The Scriv'ner vows th' Attorney is a rogue.

#### COMMENTARY.

VER. 217. *Vice is a monster, &c.*) There is another Error of practice, which hath more common and fatal effects; and is next considered (from v. 216 to 221.) It is this, that though, at the first aspect, Vice be so horrible as to affright all beholders, yet, when by habit we are once grown familiar with her, we first suffer, and in time begin to lose the memory of her nature; which necessarily implies an equal ignorance in the nature of Virtue. Hence Men conclude, that there is neither one nor the other.

VER. 221. *But where th' Extreme of Vice, &c.*) But it is not only that extreme of Vice next to Virtue, which betrays us into these mistakes. We are deceived too, as he shews us (from v. 220 to 231.) by our observations about the other extreme: For from the extreme of Vice being unsettled, Men conclude that Vice itself is only nominal.



Ev'n those who dwell beneath its very zone,  
 Or never feel the rage, or never own;  
 What happier natures shrink at with affright,  
 The hard inhabitant contends is right. 230

Virtuous and vicious ev'ry Man must be,  
 Few in th' extreme, but all in the degree;  
 The rogue and fool by fits is fair and wise;  
 And ev'n the best, by fits, what they despise.  
 'Tis but by parts we follow good or ill; 235  
 For, Vice or Virtue, Self directs it still;  
 Each individual seeks a sev'ral goal;  
 But HEAV'N'S great view is One, and that the Whole.

#### VARIATIONS.

Against the Thief the Attorney loud inveighs,  
 For whose ten pound the Country twenty pays.  
 The Thief damns Judges, and the Knaves of State;  
 And dying, mourns small Villains hang'd by great.

#### COMMENTARY.

VER. 231. *Virtuous and vicious ev'ry Man must be.* There is yet a third cause of this error, of *no Vice, no Virtue*, composed of the other two; *i. e.* partly *speculative*, and partly *practical*. And this also the poet here considers (from v. 230 to 239.) shewing it ariseth from the imperfection of the best characters, and the inequality of all; whence it happens that no Man is extremely virtuous or vicious, nor extremely constant in the pursuit of either. Why it so happens, the Poet, with admirable sagacity, assigns the cause, in this line:

For; Vice or Virtue, SELF directs it still.

An adherence or regard to what is, in the sense of the world, a Man's own Interest, making an extreme in either impossible. Its effect in keeping a good Man from the extreme of Virtue, needs no explanation; and in an ill Man, Self-interest shewing him the necessity of some kind of reputation, the procuring, and preserving that, will necessarily keep him from the extreme of Vice.

That counter-works each folly and caprice;  
 That disappoints th' effect of ev'ry vice;      240  
 That, happy frailties to all ranks apply'd;  
 Shame to the virgin, to the matron pride,  
 Fear to the statesman, rashness to the chief,  
 To kings presumption, and to crowds belief:  
 That, Virtue's ends from vanity can raise,      245  
 Which seeks no int'rest, no reward but praise;  
 And build on wants, and on defects of mind,  
 The joy, the peace, the glory of Mankind.

Heav'n forming each on other to depend,  
 A master, or a servant, or a friend,      250  
 Bids each on other for assistance call,  
 'Till one Man's weakness grows the strength of all.

COMMENTARY.

VER. 239. *That counterworks each folly and caprice;*) The mention of this principle, that *Self* directs Vice and Virtue, and its consequence, which is, that

Each individual seeks a sev'ral goal,  
 leads the author to observe

That HEAVN'S great View is One, and that the Whole.  
 And this brings him naturally round again to his main subject; namely, *God's producing good out of ill*, which he prosecutes (from v. 238 to 249.

VER. 249. *Heav'n forming each on other depends.*) I. Hitherto the Poet hath been employed in discoursing of the use of the Passions, with regard to Society at large; and in freeing his doctrine from objections: This is the *first* general division of the subject of this epistle.

II. He comes to shew (from 248 to 261.) the use of these Passions, with regard to the more confined circle of our Friends, Relations, and Acquaintance: and this is the *second* general division.

Wants, frailties, passions. closer still ally  
 The common int'rest, or endear the tie.  
 To these we owe true friendship, love sincere 255  
 Each home-felt joy that life inherits here;  
 Yet from the same we learn, in its decline,  
 Those joys, those loves, those int'rests to resign;  
 Taught half by Reason, by mere decay,  
 To welcome death, and calmly pass away. 260  
 Whate'er the Passion, knowledge, fame, or pelf,  
 Not one will change his neighbour with himself.

## COMMENTARY.

VER. 261. *Whate'er the Passion, &c.*) III. The poet having thus shewn the use of the Passions in *Society*, and in *Domestic* life; he comes, in the last place (from 260 to the end) to shew their use to the *Individual*, even in their illusions; the imaginary happiness they present, helping to make the real miseries of life less insupportable: And this is his *third* general division:

## NOTES.

VER. 253. *Wants, frailties, passions, closer still ally The common int'rest, &c.*) As these lines have been misunderstood, I shall give the reader their plain and obvious meaning. To these frailties (says he) we owe all the endearments of private life; yet, when we come to that age, which generally disposes Men to think more seriously of the true value of things, and consequently of their provision for a future state, the consideration, that the grounds of those joys, loves, and friendships, are wants, frailties, and passions, proves the best expedient to wean us from the world; a disengagement so friendly to that provision we are now making for another. The observation is new, and would in any place be extremely beautiful, but has here an infinite grace and propriety, as it so well confirms, by an instance of great moment, the general thesis, *That God makes Ill, at every step, productive of Good.*

The learn'd is happy nature to explore,  
 The fool is happy that he knows no more;  
 The rich is happy in the plenty giv'n,      265  
 The poor contents him with the care of Heav'n.  
 See the blind beggar dance, the cripple sing,  
 The for a hero, lunatic a king;  
 The starving chemist in his golden views  
 Supremely blest, the poet in his Muse.      270

## COMMENTARY.

— Opinion gilds with varying rays  
 Those painted clouds that beautify our days, &c.  
 One prospect lost, another still we gain;  
 And not a vanity is giv'n in vain.

Which must needs vastly raise our idea of God's goodness, who hath not only provided more than a counter balance of real happiness to human miseries, but hath even, in his infinite compassion, bestowed on those, who were so foolish as not to have made this provision, an imaginary happiness; that they may not be quite over-borne with the load of human miseries. This is the poet's great and noble thought; as strong and solid as it is new and ingenious: which teaches, That these illusions are the follies of Men, which they willfully fall into, and through their own fault; thereby depriving themselves of much happiness, and exposing themselves to equal misery: But that still God (according to his universal way of working) graciously turns these follies so far to the advantage of his miserable creatures, as to be the present solace and support of their distresses:

— Tho' Man's a fool, yet God is wise.

## NOTES.

VER. 270. — *the poet in his Muse.*) The author having said, that no one would change his profession or views for those of another, intended to carry his observation still further, and shew that Men were unwilling to exchange their own acquirements



See some strange comfort ev'ry state attend,  
 And pride bestow'd on all, a common friend:  
 See some fit passion ev'ry age supply,  
 Hope travels thro', nor quits us when we die.

Behold the child, by nature's kindly law, 175  
 Pleas'd with a rattle, tickled with a straw:  
 Some livelier play-thing gives his youth delight,  
 A little louder, but as empty quite:  
 Scarfs, garters, gold, amuse his riper stage,  
 And beads and pray'r-books are the toys of age;  
 Pleas'd with this bauble still, as that before; 281  
 'Till tir'd he sleeps, and Life's poor play is o'er.  
 Mean-while Opinion gilds with varying rays  
 Those painted clouds that beautify our days;  
 Each want of happiness by Hope supply'd, 285  
 And each vacuity of sense by Pride:

## NOTES.

even for those of the same kind, confessedly larger, and infinitely more eminent, in another. To this end he wrote,

What partly pleases, totally will shock:

I question much, if Toland would be Locke:

but wanting another proper instance of this truth when he published his last Edition of the Essay, he reserved the lines above for some following one.

VER. 280. *And beads and pray'r-books are the toys of age:*) A Satire on what is called in Popery the *Opus operatum*. As this is a description of the circle of human life returning into itself by a second child-hood, the poet has with great elegance concluded his description with the same image with which he set out.

VER. 286. *And each vacuity of sense by Pride:*) An eminent Casuist, Father Francis Garasse, in his *Somme Theologique*, has drawn

These build as fast as knowledge can destroy;  
 In folly's cup still laughs the bubble, joy;  
 One prospect lost, another still we gain;  
 And not a vanity is giv'n in vain;      290  
 Ev'n mean Self-love becomes, by force divine,  
 The scale to measure others wants by thine.  
 See! and confess. one comfort still must rise;  
 'Tis this, Tho' Man's a fool, yet GOD IS WISE.

## NOTES.

a very charitable conclusion from this principle. „Selon la Justice  
 „(says this equitable Divine) tout travail honnête doit être recom-  
 „pensé de louange ou de satisfaction. Quant les bons esprits font  
 „un ouvrage excellent, ils sont justement récompensés par les  
 „suffrages du Public. Quand un pauvre esprit travaille beaucoup,  
 „pour faire un mauvais ouvrage, il n'est pas juste ni raisonnable,  
 „qu'il attende des louanges publiques: car elles ne lui sont pas  
 „duës. Mais afin que ses travaux ne demeurent pas sans recom-  
 „pense, Dieu lui donne une satisfaction personnelle, que personne  
 „ne lui peut envier sans une injustice plus que barbare; tout  
 „ainsi que Dieu, qui est juste, donne de la satisfaction aux Gré-  
 „nouilles de leur chant. Autrement la blâme public, joint à  
 „leur mécontentement, seroit suffisant pour les réduire au des-  
 „espoir. „





# A R G U M E N T OF E P I S T L E III.

*Of the Nature, and State of Man with respect to  
Society.*

I. *THE whole Universe one System of Society, v. 7, &c. Nothing made wholly for itself, nor yet wholly for another, v. 27. The happiness of Animals mutual, v. 49. II. Reason or Instinct operate alike to the good of each Individual, v. 79. Reason or Instinct operate also to Society, in all animals, v. 109. III. How far Society carried by Instinct, v. 115. How much farther by Reason, v. 128. IV. Of that which is called the State of Nature, v. 144. Reason instructed by Instinct in the invention of Arts, v. 166, and in the Forms of Society, v. 176. V. Origin of Political Societies, v. 196. Origin of Monarchy, v. 207. Patriarchal Government, v. 212. VI. Origin of true Religion and Government, from the same principle, of Love, v. 231, &c. Origin of Superstition and Tyranny, from the same principle, of Fear v. 237, &c. The Influence of Self-love operating to the social and public Good, v. 266. Restoration of true Religion and Government on their first principle, v. 285. Mixed Government, v. 288. Various Forms of each, and the true end of all, v. 300, &c.*





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See some fit Passion every Age supply.  
Hope travels through, nor quits us when we die.  
Eps. on Man. Ep. III.

**H**ERE then we rest: The Universal Cause  
 "Acts to one end, but acts by various laws."

VER. I. in several Edit. in 4to.

## COMMENTARY.

(Ev'n mean Self-love becomes, by force divine,  
The scale to measure others wants by thine.)  
maketh the introduction to the third.

Here then we rest: „The Universal Cause  
„Acts to one end, but acts by various laws.,,

Each individual seeks a few'ral goal.

On mutual wants built mutual happiness.

G

In all the madness of superfluous health,  
 The trim of pride, the impudence of wealth,  
 Let this great truth be present night and day;      5  
 But most be present, if we preach or pray.

Look round our World; behold the chain of Love  
 Combining all below and all above.

## COMMENTARY

It was necessary to explain these two first lines, the better to see the pertinency and force of what followeth (from v. 2 to 7.) where the poet warns such to take notice of this truth, whose circumstances placing them in an imaginary station of Independence, and a real one of insensibility to mutual Wants (from whence general Happiness results) make them but too apt to overlook the true system of things; *viz.* Men in full health and opulence. This caution was necessary with regard to Society; but still more necessary with regard to Religion: Therefore he especially recommends the memory of it both to Clergy and Laity, when they preach or pray; because the preacher, who doth not consider the first Cause under this view; as a Being consulting the good of the whole, must needs give a very unworthy idea of him; and the suppliant, who prayeth as one not related to a whole, or a disregarding the happiness of it, will not only pray in vain, but offend his Maker by an impious attempt to counterwork his dispensation.

VER. 7. *Look round our World; &c.*) Next he introduceth his system of human Sociability (v. 7, 8.) by shewing it to be the dictate of the Creator; and that Man, in this, did but follow the example of general Nature, which is united in one close system of benevolence.

## NOTES.

VER. 3. — (*superfluous health*.) Immoderate labour and study are the great impairers of health: They, whose station sets them above both, must needs have an abundance of health, which not being employed in the common service, but wasted in Luxury, the poet properly calls a *superfluity*.

See plastic Nature working to this end,  
 The single atoms each to other tend,      10  
 Attract, attracted to, the next in place  
 Form'd and impell'd its neighbour to embrace.  
 See Matter next, with various live endu'd,

## COMMENTARY.

VER. 9. See *plastic Nature working to this end,*) This he proveth, *first* (from v. 8 to 13,) on the noble theory of Attraction, from the œconomy of the material world; where there is a general conspiracy in all the particles of Matter to work for one end; the use, beauty, and harmony of the whole mass.

VER. 13. See *Matter next, &c.*) The *second* argument (from v. 12 to 27.) is taken from the vegetable and animal world; whose Beings serve mutually for the production, support, and sustentation of each other.

But this part of the argument, in which the poet tells us, that God

Connects each being; greatest with the least;  
 Made Beast in aid of Man, and Man of Beast;  
 All serv'd, all serving —

awaking again the old pride of his adversaries, who cannot bear that Man should be thought to be *serving* as well as *served*; he takes this occasion again to humble them (from v. 26 to 49.) by the same kind of argument he had so successfully employed in the first epistle, and which our comment on that epistle hath considered at large.

## NOTES.

VER. 4. — *impudence of wealth,*) Because *wealth* pretends to be wisdom, wit, learning, honesty, and, in short, all the virtues in their turns.

VER. 12. *Form'd and impell'd, &c.*) To make Matter so cohere as to fit it for the uses intended by its Creator, a proper *configuration* of its insensible parts, is as necessary as that quality so equally and universally conferred upon it, called *Attraction*. To express the first part of this thought, our Author says *form'd*; and to express the latter, *impell'd*.



Press to one centre still, the gen'ral Good.  
 See dying vegetables life sustain, 15  
 See life dissolving vegetate again:  
 All forms that perish other forms supply,  
 (By turns we catch the vital breath, and die)  
 Like bubbles on the sea of Matter born,  
 They rise, they break, and to that sea return. 20  
 Nothing is foreign; Parts relate to whole;  
 One all-extending, all-preserving Soul  
 Connects each being, greatest with the least;  
 Made Beast in aid of Man, and Man of Beast;  
 All serv'd, all serving: nothing stands alone; 25  
 The chain holds on, and where it ends, unknown.  
 Has God, thou fool! work'd solely for thy good,  
 Thy joy, thy pastime, thy attire, thy food?  
 Who for thy table feeds the wanton fawn,  
 For him as kindly spread the flow'ry lawn: 30  
 It is for thee the lark ascends and sings?  
 Joy tunes his voice, joy elevates his wings.  
 It is for thee the linnet pours his throat?  
 Loves of his own and raptures swell the note.  
 The bounding steed you pompously bestride 35

## NOTES.

VER. 22. *One all-extending, all-preserving Soul.*) Which, in the language of Sir Isaac Newton, is, „Deus omnipotens est, „non per virtutem solum, sed etiam per substantiam: nam virtus sine substantia subsistere non potest.,, *Newt. Princ. schol. gen. sub fin.*

VER. 23. *Greatest with the least;*) As acting more strongly and immediately in beasts, whose instinct is plainly an external reason; which made an old school-man say, with great elegance, „Deus est anima brutorum:,,

In this 'tis God directs —



Shares with his lord the pleasure and the pride.  
 Is thine alone the feed that strews the plain?  
 The birds of heav'n shall vindicate their grain  
 Thine the full harvest of the golden year?  
 Part pays, and justly, the deserving steer: 40  
 The hog, that plows not nor obeys thy call,  
 Lives on the labours of this lord of all.

Know, Nature's children shall divide her care;  
 The fur that warms a monarch, warm'd a bear,  
 While Man exclaims, "See all things for my use!" 45  
 "See man for mine!" replies a pamper'd goose:  
 And just as short of reason he must fall,  
 Who thinks all made for one, not one for all.

Grant that the pow'rful still the weak controul;  
 Be Man the Wit and Tyrant of the whole: 50

#### VARIATIONS.

After v. 46. in the former Editions,

What care to tend, to lodge, to cram, to treat him!  
 All this he knew, but not that 'twas to eat him.  
 As far as Goose could judge, he reason'd right;  
 But as to Man, mistook the matter quite.

#### COMMENTARY.

VER. 49. *Grant that the pow'rful still the weak controul;*  
 However, his adversaries, loth to give up the question, will rea-

#### NOTES

VER. 45. *See all things for my use!* On the contrary, the  
 wise man hath said, *The Lord hath made all things for himself,*  
 Prov. xvi. 4.

VER. 50. *Be Man the Wit and Tyrant of the whole;* Allu-  
 ding to the witty system of that Philosopher, which made Ani-  
 mals mere Machines, insensible of pain or pleasure; and so encour-  
 aged Men in the exercise of that *Tyranny* over their fellow-crea-  
 tures, consequent on such a principle.

Nature that Tyrant checks; He only knows,  
 And helps, another creature's wants and woes.  
 Say, will the falcon, stooping from above,

## COMMENTARY.

son upon the matter; and we are now to suppose them objecting against Providence in this manner. — We grant, say they, that in the irrational, as in the inanimate creation, all is *serv'd*, and all is *-serving*: But, with regard to Man, the case is different; he standeth single. For his reason hath endowed him both with power and address sufficient to make all things serve him; and his Self-love, of which you have so largely provided for him, will dispose him, in his turn, to serve any: Therefore your theory is imperfect. — Not so, replies the poet (from v. 47 to 79.) I grant that Man, indeed, affects to be the Wit and Tyrant of the whole, and would fain shake off

— that chain of love,

Combining all below and all above:

But Nature, even by the very gift of Reason, checks this tyrant. For Reason endowing Man with the ability of setting together the memory of the past with his conjectures about the future; and past misfortunes making him apprehensive of more to come, this disposeth him to pity and relieve others in a state of suffering. And the passion growing habitual, naturally extendeth its effects to all that have a sense of suffering. Now as brutes have neither Man's Reason, nor his inordinate Self-love, to draw them from the system of Benevolence; so they wanted not, and therefore have not, this human sympathy of another's misery. By which passion, we see, those qualities, in Man, balance one another; and so retain him in that general Order, in which Providence hath placed its whole creation. But this is not all; Man's interest, amusement, vanity, and luxury, tie him still closer to the system of benevolence, by obliging him to provide for the support of other animals; and though it be, for the most part, only to devour them with the greater gust, yet this does not abate the proper happiness of the animals so preserved, to whom Providence hath not imparted the useless knowledge of their end. From all which it appears, that the theory is yet uniform and perfect.

Smir with her varying plumage, spare the dove?  
 Admires the jay the insect's gilded wings      55  
 Or hears the hawk when Philomela sings?  
 Man cares for all: to birds he gives his woods,  
 To beasts his pastures and to fish his floods;  
 For some his Int'rest prompts him to provide,  
 For more his pleasure, yet for more his pride:      60  
 All feed on one vain Patron, and enjoy  
 Th'extensive blessing of his luxury,  
 That very life his learned hunger craves,  
 He saves from famine, from the savage saves;  
 Nay, feasts the animal he dooms his feast,      65  
 And, till he ends the being, makes it blest;  
 Which sees no more the stroke, or feels the pain,  
 Than favour'd Man by touch ethereal slain.  
 The creature had his feast of life before;  
 Thou too must perish, when thy feast is o'er!      70

To each unthinking being, Heav'n a friend,  
 Gives not the useless knowledge of its end:  
 To Man imparts it, but with such a view  
 As, while he dreads it, makes him hope it too:  
 The hour conceal'd, and so remote the fear,      75  
 Death still draws nearer, never seeming near.  
 Great standing miracle! that Heav'n assign'd  
 Its only thinking thing this turn of mind.

NOTES.

VER. 68. *Then favour'd Man, &c.*) Several of the ancients,  
 and many of the Orientals since, esteemed those who were struck  
 by lightning as sacred persons, and the particular favourites of  
 Heaven.      P.

II. Whether with Reason, or with Instinct blest,  
 Know, all enjoy that pow'r which suits them best; 80  
 To blifs alike by that direction tend,  
 And find the means proportion'd to their end.  
 Say, where full Instinct is th'unerring guide,  
 What Pope or Council can they need beside?  
 Reason, however able, cool at best, 85

## VARIATIONS.

After v. 84. in the MS.

While Man, with opening views of various ways  
 Confounded, by the aid of knowledge strays:  
 Too weak to chuse, yet chusing still in haste,  
 One moment gives the pleasure and distaste.

## COMMENTARY.

VER. 79. *Whether with Reason, &c.* But even to this, as a caviller would still object, we must suppose him so to do, — Admit (says he) you have shewn that Nature hath endowed all animals, whether human or brutal, with such faculties as admirably fit them to promote the general good: yet, in its care for this, hath not Nature neglected to provide for the private good of the individual? We have cause to think she hath; and we suppose, it was on this exclusive consideration that she kept back from brutes the gift of Reason (so necessary a means of private happiness) because Reason, as we find in the instance of *Man*, where there is occasion for all the complicated contrivance you have described above; to make the effects of his Passions counter-work the immediate powers of his Reason, in order to keep him subservient to the general system; Reason, we say, naturally tends to draw Beings into a private, independent system. This the poet answers; by shewing (from v. 78 to 109.) that the happiness of animal life consisting in the improvement of the mind, can be procured by Reason only; but the happiness of animal life consisting in the gratifications of sense, is best promoted by Instinct. And, with regard to the regular and constant operation of each, in *that*, Instinct hath plainly the advantage; for here God directs immediately; there, only mediately through Man.



I. Ep. III.      ESSAY ON MAN.      75

Cares not for service, or but serves when prest,  
 Stays 'till we call, and then not often near;  
 But honest Instinct comes a volunteer,  
 Sure never to o'er-shoot, but just to hit;  
 While still too wide or short is human Wit;      90  
 Sure by quick Nature happiness to gain,  
 Which heavier Reason labours at in vain.  
 This too serves always, Reason never long;  
 One must go right, the other may go wrong.  
 See then the acting and comparing pow'rs      95  
 One in their nature, which are two in ours;  
 And Reason raise o'er Instinct as you can,  
 In this 'tis God directs, in that 'tis Man.

Who taught the nations of the field and wood  
 To shun their poison, and to chuse their food?      100  
 Prescient, the tides or-tempests to withstand,  
 Build on the wave, or arch beneath the sand?  
 Who made the spider parallels design,  
 Sure as De-moivre, without rule or line?  
 Who bid the stork, Columbus-like, explore      105  
 Heav'ns not his own, and worlds unknown before?  
 Who calls the council, states the certain day,  
 Who forms the phalanx, and who points the way?

III. God, in the nature of each being, founds  
 Its proper bliss, and sets its proper bounds:      110

COMMENTARY.

VER. 108. *God, in the nature of each being, &c.*) The author now cometh to the main subject of his epistle, the proof of Man's SOCIABILITY, from the two general societies composed by him; the *natural*, subject to *paternal* authority; and the *civil*, subject to that of a *magistrate*. This he hath the address to introduce, from what had preceded, in so easy and

But as he fram'd a Whole, the Whole to bless.  
 On mutual Wants built mutual Happiness:  
 So from the first, eternal ORDER  
 And creature link'd to creature, man to man.  
 Whate'er of life all-quick'ning æther keeps, 115  
 Or breathes thro' air, or shoots beneath the deeps,  
 Or pours profuse on earth, one nature feeds  
 The vital flame, and swells the genial feeds.  
 Not man alone, but all that roam the wood,

## COMMENTARY.

natural a manner, as sheweth him to have the art of giving all the grace to the dryness and severity of method, as well as wit to the strength and depth of Reason. The philosophic nature of his work requiring he should shew by what means those Societies were introduced, this affords him an opportunity of sliding gracefully and easily from the preliminaries into the main subject; and so giving his work that perfection of method, which we find only in the compositions of great writers. For having just before, though to a different purpose, described the power of bestial Instinct to attain the happiness of the *Individual*, he goeth on, in speaking of Instinct as it is serviceable both to that, and to the *Kind* (from v. 108 to 147.) to illustrate the original of *Society*. He sheweth, that though, as he had before observed, God had found the proper bliss of each creature in the nature of its own existence; yet these not being independent individuals, but parts of a Whole, God, to bless that Whole, built mutual happiness on mutual wants: Now, for the supply of mutual wants, creatures must necessarily come together; which is the first ground of Society amongst Men. He then proceeds to that called *natural*, subject to *paternal* authority, and arising from the union of the two sexes; describes the imperfect image of it in brutes: then explains it at large in all its causes and effects. And lastly shews, that, as in *fact*, like mere animal society, it is founded and preserved by mutual wants, the supplant of which causeth mutual happiness; so is it likewise in *right*, as a rational Society, by equity, gratitude, and the observance of the relation of things in general.

Or wing the sky, or roll along the flood,      120  
 Each loves itself, but not itself alone,  
 Each sex desires alike, 'till two are one.  
 Nor ends the pleasure with the fierce embrace;  
 They love themselves, a third time, in their race.  
 Thus beast and bird their common charge attend, 125  
 The mothers nurse it, and the fires defend;  
 The young dismiss'd to wander earth or air,  
 There stops the Instinct, and there ends the care;  
 The link dissolves, each seeks a fresh embrace,  
 Another love succeeds, another race.      130  
 A longer care Man's helpless kind demands;  
 That longer care contracts more lasting bands:  
 Reflection, Reason, still the ties improve,  
 And once extend the int'rest, and the love;  
 With choice we fix, with sympathy we burn;      135  
 Each Virtue in each Passion takes its turn;  
 And still new needs, new helps, new habits rise,  
 That graft benevolence on charities.  
 Still as one brood, and as another rose,  
 These nat'ral love maintain'd, habitual those:      140  
 The last, scarce ripen'd into perfect Man,  
 Saw helpless him from whom their life began:  
 Mem'ry and force-cast just returns engage,  
 That pointed back to youth, this on to age;  
 While pleasure, gratitude, and hope, combin'd,      145  
 Still spread the int'rest, and preserv'd the kind.

IV. Nor think, in NATURE'S STATE they blindly trod;  
 The state of Nature was the reign of God:

## COMMENTARY.

VER. 147. *Nor think in Nature's state they blindly trod;* But  
 the Atheist and Hobbist, against whom Mr. Pope argueth, deny

78      ESSAY ON MAN.      Ep. III.

Self-love and Social at her birth began,  
 Union the bond of all things, and of Man.      150  
 Pride then was not; nor Arts, that Pride to aid;  
 Man walk'd with beast, joint tenant of the shade;  
 The same his table, and the same his bed;  
 No murder cloath'd him, and no murder fed.  
 In the same temple, the resounding wood,      155

COMMENTARY.

the principle of Right, or of natural Justice, before the invention of civil compact; which, they say, gave being to it: And accordingly have had the effrontery publicly to declare, *that a state of Nature was a state of War*. This quite subverteth the poet's *natural Society*: Therefore, after this account of that state, he proceedeth to support the reality of it by overthrowing the oppugnant principle of *no natural Justice*; which he doth (from v. 146 to 169.) in shewing, by a fine description of the state of Innocence, as represented in Scripture, that a state of Nature was so far from being without natural Justice, that it was, at first, *the reign of God*, where Right and Truth universally prevailed.

NOTES.

VER. 152. *Man walk'd with beast, joint tenant of the shade;*

The poet still takes his imagery from Plutonic ideas, for the reason given above. Plato had said from old tradition, that, during the Golden age, and under the reign of Saturn, the primitive language then in use was common to man and beasts. Moral Instructors took advantage of the popular sense of this tradition, to convey their precepts under those fables, which give speech to the whole brute-creation. The naturalists understood tradition to signify, that, in the first ages, Men used inarticulate sounds like beasts to express their wants and sensations; and that it was by slow degrees they came to the use of speech. This opinion was afterwards held by Lucretius, Diodorus Sic. and Gregory of Nyss.



All vocal beings hymn'd their equal God:  
 The shrine with gore unstain'd, with gold undrest,  
 Unbrib'd, unbloody, stood the blameless priest:  
 Heav'n's attribute was Universal Care,

## NOTES.

VER. 156. *All vocal beings, &c.* This may be well explained by a sublime passage of the Psalmist, who, calling to mind the age of Innocence, and full of the great ideas of those

— Chains of Love,

Combining all below, and all above,

Which to one point and to one centre bring.

Beast, Man, or Angel, Servant, Lord, or King;

breaks out into this rapturous and divine apostrophe, to call back the devious creation to its pristine rectitude (that very state our author describes above) „Praise the Lord, all angels; „praise him, all ye hosts. Praise ye him, sun and moon; praise „him, all ye stars of light. Let them praise the name of the „Lord, for he commanded, and they were created. Praise the „Lord, from the earth, ye dragons, and all deeps; fire and hail, „snow and vapour, stormy wind fulfilling his word: Mountains; „and all hills, fruitful trees and all cedars: *Beasts* and all *cattle*, „creeping things and flying fowl: *Kings* of the earth, and all „people; *princes*, and all judges of the earth. Let them praise „the name of the Lord; for his name alone is excellent, his „glory is above the earth and heaven.,, *Psal.* cxlviii.

VER. 158. *Unbrib'd, unbloody, &c.* i. e. The state described, (from v. 261 to 269.) was not yet arrived. For then when Superstition was become so extreme as to bribe the Gods with human sacrifices (see v. 267.) Tyranny became necessitated to woo the priest for a favourable answer:

And play'd the God an engine on his foe.

VER. 159. *Heaven's attribute, &c.* The poet supposes the truth of the Scripture account, that Man was created Lord of this inferior world (Ep. I. v. 230.)

Subjected these to those, and all to thee.

And man's prerogative to rule, but spare. 160

Ah! how unlike the man of times to come!

Of half that live the butcher and the tomb;

Who, foe to Nature, hears the gen'ral groan,

Murders their species, and betrays his own.

But just disease to luxury succeeds, 165

And ev'ry death it's own avenger breeds;

The Fury-passions from that blood began,

And turn'd on Man a fiercer savage, Man.

#### NOTES.

What hath misled some to imagine him here fallen into a contradiction, was, I suppose, such passages as these,

Ask for what and the heav'nly bodies shine, &c.

And again, *Har God, thou fool! work'd solely for thy good, &c.* But in truth this is so far from contradicting what is here said of Man's prerogative, that it greatly confirms it, and the Scripture account concerning it. And because this matter has been mistaken, to the discredit of the poet's religious sentiments, by readers, whom the conduct of certain licentious writers, treating this subject in an abusive way, hath rendered jealous and mistrustful, I shall endeavour to explain it. Scripture says, that Man was made Lord of All. But this Lord become intoxicated with Pride, the common effect of sovereignty, erected himself, like more partial monarchs, into a tyrant. And as Tyranny consists in supposing *all* made for the use of *one*; he took those freedoms with *all*, that are consequent on such a principle. He soon began to consider the whole animal creation as his slaves rather than his subjects: as being created for no use of their own, but for this only; and therefore treated them with the utmost barbarity: And not so content, to add insult to his cruelty, he endeavoured to philosophize himself into an opinion that animals were mere machines, insensible of pain or pleasure. Thus Man affected to be the *Wis* as well as *Tyrant* of the Whole: and it became one who adhered to the Scripture account of Man's dominion, to reprove this abuse of it, and to shew that

Heav'n's attribute was Universal Care,

And Man's prerogative to rule, but spare.

See him from Nature rising flow to Art!  
 To copy instinct then was Reason's part;      170  
 Thus then to Man the voice of Nature spake ---  
 "Go, from the Creatures thy instructions take:

## COMMENTARY.

VER. 169. *See him from Nature rising flow to Art!*) Strict method (in which, by this time, the reader finds the poet more conversant than some were aware of) leads him next to speak of that Society, which succeeded the *Natural*, namely the *Civil*. He first explains (from v. 169 to 199.) the intermediate *means* which led Mankind from natural to civil Society. These were the invention and improvement of Arts. For while Mankind lived in a mere state of Nature, there was no need of any other government than the Paternal; but when Arts were found out and improved, then that more perfect form, under the direction of a Magistrate, became necessary. And for these reasons; first, 'to bring those arts, already found, to perfection: And, secondly, to secure the product of them to their rightful proprietors. The poet, therefore, comes now, as we say, to the invention of Arts; but being always intent on the great end for which he wrote his Essay, namely to mortify that Pride which occasions the impious complaints against Providence: he speaks of these inventions as only lessons learnt of mere animals guided by instinct; and thus, at the same time, gives a new instance of the wonderful Providence of God, who has contrived to teach mankind in a way, not only proper to humble human arrogance, but to raise our idea of infinite Wisdom to the greatest pitch. This he does in a *protopopoeia* the most sublime that ever entered into the human imagination:

Thus then to Man the voice of Nature spake:

„Go, from the creatures thy instructions take, &c.

„And for those Arts mere instinct could afford,

„Be crown'd as Monarchs, or as Gods ador'd.,,

The delicacy of the poet's address in the first part of the last line, is very remarkable. In this paragraph he has given an account of those intermediate means, that led Mankind from natural to civil Society, namely, the invention and improvement of Arts. Now here, on his conclusion of this account, and his

"Learn from the birds what food the thickets yield ;  
 "Learn from the beasts the physic of the field ;  
 "Thy arts of building from the bee receive ; 175  
 "Learn of the mole to plow, the worm to weave ;  
 "Learn of the little Nautilus to sail,  
 "Spread the thin oar, and catch the driving gale.  
 "Here too all forms of social union find,  
 "And hence let Reason, late, instruct Mankind: 180  
 "Here subterranean works and cities see ;  
 "There towns aerial on the waving tree.  
 "Learn each small People's genius, policies,

## COMMENTARY.

entry upon the description of civil Society itself, he connects the two parts the most gracefully that can be conceived, by this true historical circumstance, that it was the invention of those Arts which raised to the Magistracy in this new Society formed for the perfecting them.

## NOTES.

VER. 173. *Learn from the birds, &c.*) It is a caution commonly practised amongst Navigators, when thrown upon a desert coast, and in want of refreshments, to observe what fruits have been touched by the Birds: and to venture on these without further hesitation.

VER. 174. *Learn from the beasts, &c.*) See Pliny's *Nat. Hist.* l. viii. c. 27. where several instances are given of Animals discovering the medicinal efficacy of herbs, by their own use of them; and pointing out to some operations in the art of healing, by their own practice.

VER. 177. *Learn of the little Nautilus.*) Oppian. *Halieut.* lib. i. describes this fish in the following manner: „They swim on the surface of the sea, on the back of their shells, which exactly resemble the hulk of a ship; they raise two feet like masts, and extend a membrane between, which serves as a sail; the other two feet they employ as oars at the side. They are usually seen in the Mediterranean.” P.



"The Ant's republic, and the realm of Bees;  
 "How those in common all their wealth bestow, 134  
 "And Anarchy without confusion know;  
 "And these for ever, tho' a Monarch reign,  
 "Their sep'rate cells and properties maintain.  
 "Mark what unvary'd laws preserve each state,  
 "Laws wise as Nature, and as fix'd as Fate. 190  
 "In vain thy Reason finer webs shall draw,  
 "Entangle Justice in her net of Law,  
 "And right, too rigid, harden into wrong;  
 "Still for the strong too weak, the weak too strong.  
 "Yet go! and thus o'er all the creatures sway, 195  
 "Thus let the wiser make the rest obey;  
 "And for those Arts mere Instinct could afford,  
 "Be crown'd as Monarchs, or as Gods ador'd."

V. Great Nature spoke; observant Men obey'd;  
 Cities were built, Societies were made: 200

#### VARIATIONS.

VER. 197. in the first Editions,  
 Who for those Arts they learn'd of Brutes before,  
 As, Kings shall crown them, or as Gods adore.

#### COMMENTARY.

VER. 199. *Great Nature spoke;*) After all this necessary preparation, the poet shews (from v. 198 to 209.) how civil Society followed, and the advantages it produced.

#### NOTES.

VER. 199. *observant Men obey'd;*) The epithet is beautiful, as signifying both obedience to the voice of Nature, and attention to the lessons of the animal creation.

Here rose one little state; another near  
 Grew by like means, and join'd, thro' love or fear.  
 Did here the trees with ruddier burdens bend,  
 And there the streams in purer rills descend?  
 What War could ravish, Commerce could bestow,  
 And he return'd a friend, who came a foe. 206  
 Converse and Love mankind might strongly draw,  
 When Love was Liberty, and Nature Law.  
 Thus States were form'd; the name of King unknown,

## VARIATIONS.

VER. 201. *Here rose one little state, &c.*) In the MS. thus,  
 The Neighbours leagu'd to guard their common spot:  
 And Love was Nature's dictate, Murder, nor  
 For want alone each animal contents;  
 Tigers with Tigers, that remov'd, are friends.  
 Plain Nature's wants the common mother crown'd,  
 She pou'd her acorns, herbs, and streams around.  
 No Treasure then for rapine to invade,  
 What need to fight for sun-shine or for shade?  
 And half the cause of contest was remov'd,  
 When beauty could be kind to all who lov'd.

## COMMENTARY.

VER. 209. *Thus States were form'd;*) Having thus explained the original of Civil Society, he shews us next (from v. 208 to 215.) that to this Society a *civil magistrate*, properly so called,

## NOTES.

VER. 208. *When love was Liberty;*) i. e. When men had no need to guard their native liberty from their governors by civil passions; the love which each master of family had for those under his care being their best security.

'Till common int'rest plac'd the sway in one. 210

'Twas VIRTUE ONLY (or in arts or arms,

Diffusing blessings, or averring harms)

The same which in a Sire the Sons obey'd,

A Prince the Father of a People made.

VI. 'Till then, by Nature crown'd, each Patriarch fate,  
King, priest, and parent of his growing state; 216

## COMMENTARY.

did belong: And this in confutation of that idle hypothesis, which pretends that God conferred the regal title on the Fathers of families; from whence men, when they had instituted Society, were to fetch their Governors. On the contrary, our author shews, that a King was unknown, 'till common interest, which led men to institute civil government, led them at the same time to institute a governor. However, that it is true that the same wisdom or valour, which gained regal obedience from sons to the sire, procured kings a paternal authority, and made them considered as fathers of their people. Which probably was the original (and, while mistaken, continues to be the chief support) of that slavish error: antiquity representing its earliest monarchs under the idea of a common father, *πατὴρ ἀνδρῶν*. Afterwards indeed they became a kind of foster-fathers, *ποιμένα λαῶν*, as Homer calls one of them: 'Till at length they began to devour that flock they had been so long accustomed to shear; and, as Plutarch says of Cecrops, *ἐκ χρηστῆ βασιλείας ἄγριον καὶ δράκοντι δὴ γενόμενον* TYPANNON.

VER. 215. 'Till then, by Nature crown'd, &c.) The poet now returns (at v. 215 to 241.) to what he had left unfinished in

## NOTES.

VER. 211. 'Twas Virtue only, &c.) Our author hath good authority for this account of the origin of kingship. Aristotle assures us, that it was Virtue only, or in arts or arms: *Καθίσταται Βασιλεὺς ἐκ τῶν ἐπιεικῶν καθ' ὑπεροχὴν ἀρετῆς, ἢ πρᾶξιων τῶν ἀπὸ ἀρετῆς, ἢ καθ' ὑπεροχὴν τοιούτου γένους*.

On him, their second Providence, they hung,  
Their law his eye, their oracle his tongue.

## COMMENTARY.

his description of natural Society. This, which appears irregular is indeed a fine instance of his thorough knowledge of the art of Method. I will explain it:

This third epistle, we see, considers Man with respect to Society; the second, with respect to Himself; and the fourth, with respect to Happiness. But in none of these relations does the poet ever lose sight of him under that in which he stands to God; it will follow, therefore, that speaking of him with respect to Society, the account would be then most imperfect, were he not at the same time considered with respect to his Religion; for between these two there is a close, and, while things continue in order, a most interesting connection:

True faith, true policy, united ran;

That was but love of God, and this of Man.

Now Religion suffering no change or depravation, when Man first entered into civil Society, but continuing the same as in the state of Nature; the author, to avoid repetition, and to bring the accounts of *true* and *false* religion nearer to one another, in order to contrast them by the advantage of that situation, deferred giving account of his *Religion* till he had spoken of the origin of that Society. Thence it is that he here resumes the account of the state of Nature, that is, so much of it as he had left untouched, which was only the Religion of it. This consisting in the knowledge of one God, the creator of all things, he shews how Men came by that knowledge: That it was either found out by Reason, which giving to every effect a cause, instructed them to go from cause to cause, till they came to the first, who being causeless, would necessarily be judged self-existent: or else taught by Tradition, which preserved the memory of the Creation. He then tells us *what* these men, undebauched by false science, understood by God's Nature and Attributes: *First*, of God's *Nature*, that they easily distinguished between the Worker and the Work, saw the substance of the Creator to be distinct and different from that of the creature, and so were in no dan-



He from the wond'ring furrow call'd the food,  
 Taught to command the fire, controul the flood, 220  
 Draw forth the monsters of th'abyss profound,  
 Or fetch th'aerial eagle to the ground.  
 'Till drooping, sick'ning, dying they began  
 Whom they rever'd as God to mourn as Man:  
 Then, looking up from fire to fire, explor'd 225  
 One great first father, and that first ador'd.  
 Or plain tradition that this All begun,

COMMENTARY.

ger of falling into the horrid opinion of the Greek philosophers, and their follower, Spinoza. And simple Reason teaching them that the Creator was but one, they easily saw that all was right, and were in as little danger of falling into the Manichean error; which, when oblique Wit had broken the steady light of Reason, imagined all was not right, having before imagined all was not the work of One. *Secondly*, he shews what they understood of God's *Attributes*; that they easily conceived a Father where they had found a Deity; and that a sovereign being could only be a sovereign Good.

NOTES.

VER. 219. *He from the wond'ring furrow, &c.* (i. e. He subdued the intractability of all the *four elements*, and made them subservient to the use of Man.

VER. 225. *Then, looking up, &c.* The poet here maketh their more serious attention to Religion to have arisen, not from their gratitude amidst abundance, but from their helplessness in distress; by shewing that, during the former state, they rested in *second causes*, the immediate authors of their blessings, *whom they revered as God*; but that, in the other, they reasoned up to the *First*:

Then looking up from fire to fire; &c.

This, I am afraid, is but too true a representation of human nature.

Convey'd unbroken faith from fire to son;  
 The worker from the work distinct was known,  
 And simple Reason never sought but one: 230  
 Ere Wit oblique had broke that steddy light,  
 Man, like his Maker, saw that all was right;  
 To Virtue, in the paths of Pleasure trod  
 And own'd a Father when he own'd a God.  
 Love all the faith, and all th'allegiance then; 235  
 For Nature knew no right divine in Men,  
 No ill could fear in God; and understood  
 A sov'reign being but a sov'reign good.  
 True faith, true policy, united ran,  
 That was but love of God, and this of Man. 240

Who first taught souls enslav'd, and realms undone  
 Th'enormous faith of many made for one;

## COMMENTARY.

VER. 241. *Who first taught souls enslav'd, &c.*) Order leadeth the poet to speak next (from v. 240 to 246.) of the corruption of *civil society* into *Tyranny*, and its Causes; and here, with all the art of address as well as truth, he observes it arose

## NOTES.

VER. 231. *Ere Wit oblique, &c.*) A beautiful allusion to the effects of the prismatic glass on the rays of light.

VER. 242. *Th'enormous faith, &c.*) In this Aristotle placeth the difference between a King and a Tyrant, that the first supposeth himself made for the People; the other, that the People are made for him: Βάλλεται δ' ο βασιλῆυς εἶναι φύλαξ, ὅπως οἱ μὲν κελημένοι τὰς εἰσίας μηδὲν ἀδικον πάσχωσιν, ὁ δὲ δῆμος μὴ ὑβρίζηται μηδὲν ἢ δὲ ΤΥΡΑΝΝΙΣ πρὸς ἑδὲν ἀποβλέπει κοινόν, εἰ μὴ τῆς ἰδίας ἀφελείας χάριν. Pol. lib. v. cap. 10.

That proud exception to all Nature's laws,  
 T'invert the world, and counter-work its Cause?  
 Force first made Conquest, and that conquest, Law;

## COMMENTARY

from the violation of that great Principle, which he so much insists upon throughout his Essay, *that each was made for the use of all*. We may be sure, that, in this corruption, where natural justice was thrown aside, and force, the Atheist's justice, presided in its stead, Religion would follow the fate of civil Society. We know, from ancient history, it did so. Accordingly Mr. Pope (from v. 245 to 269.) with corrupt Politics describes corrupt Religion and its Causes: he first informs us, agreeable to his exact knowledge of Antiquity, that it was the Politician and not the Priest (as our illiterate tribe of Free-thinkers would make us believe) who first corrupted Religion. Secondly, That the Superstition he brought in was, not invented by him, as an engine to play upon others (as the dreaming Atheist feigns, who would thus miserably account for the origin of Religion) but was a trap he first fell into himself.

## NOTES.

VER. 245. *Force first made Conquest, &c.* All this is agreeable to fact, and sheweth our author's exact knowledge of human nature. For that *Impotency* of mind (as the Latin writers call it) which giveth birth to the enormous crimes necessary to support a Tyranny, naturally subiecteth its owner to all the vain, as well as real, terrors of Conscience: Hence the whole machinery of Superstition.

It is true, the Poet observes, that afterwards, when the Tyrant's fright was over, he had cunning enough, from the experience of the effect of Superstition upon himself, to turn it by the assistance of the Priest (who for his reward went sharer with him in the Tyranny) as his best defence against his Subjects, For a Tyrant naturally and reasonably deemeth all his Slaves to be his enemies.

Having given the Causes of Superstition, he next describes its objects:

'Till Superstition taught the tyrant awe. 246  
 Then shar'd the Tyranny, then lent it aid,  
 And Gods of Conquerors, Slaves of Subjects made:  
 She 'midst the light'ning's blaze, and thunder's sound,  
 When rock'd the mountains, and when groan'd the  
 ground, 250  
 She taught the weak to bend, the proud to pray,  
 To Pow'r unseen, and mightier far than they:  
 She, from the rending earth and bursting skies,  
 Saw Gods descend, and fiends infernal rise: 254  
 Here fix'd the dreadful, there the blest abodes;  
 Fear made her Devils, and weak Hope her Gods;  
 Gods partial, changeful, passionate, unjust,  
 Whose attributes were Rage, Revenge, or Lust;  
 Such as the souls of cowards might conceive,  
 And, form'd like tyrants, tyrants would believe. 266  
 Zeal then, not charity, became the guide;

## NOTES.

Gods partial, changeful, passionate, unjust, &c.

The ancient Pagan Gods are here very exactly described. This fact is a convincing evidence of the truth of that original, which the poet giveth to Superstition; for if these phantasms were first raised in the imagination of Tyrants, they must needs have the qualities here assigned to them. For Force being Tyrant's Virtue, and Luxury his Happiness, the attributes of his God would of course be Revenge and Lust; in a word, the anti-type of himself. But there was another, and more substantial cause, of the Resemblance between a Tyrant and a Pagan god; and that was the making Gods of Conquerors, as the poet says, and so canonizing a tyrant's vices with his person. That these gods should suit a people humbled to the stroke of a master, will be no wonder, if we recollect a generous saying of the ancients: *That day which sees a Man a slave, takes away half his Virtue.*



And hell was built on spite, and heav'n on pride.  
 Then sacred seem'd th' etherial vault no more;  
 Altars grew marble then, and reek'd with gore;  
 Then first the Flamen tasted living food;      265  
 Next his grim idol smear'd with human blood;  
 With heav'n's own thunders shook the world below,  
 And play'd the God an engine on his foe.

So drives Self-love, thro' just and thro' unjust,  
 To one Man's pow'r, ambition, lucre, lust:      270

## COMMENTARY.

VER. 269. *So drives Self-love; &c.* The inference our author draws from all this (from v. 268 to 283.) is, that Self-love driveth through right and wrong; it causeth the Tyrant to violate the rights of mankind; and it causeth the People to vindicate that violation. For Self-love being common to the whole species, and setting each individual in pursuit of the same objects, it became necessary for each, if he would secure his own, to provide for the safety of another's. And thus Equity and Benevolence arose from that same Self-love which had given birth to Avarice and Injustice:

His Safety must his Liberty restrain;

All join to guard what each desires to gain.

There is not any where shewn greater address in the disposition of this work than with regard to the inference before us; which not only giveth a proper and timely support to what was before advanced, in the second epistle, concerning the nature and effects of Self-love; but is a necessary introduction to what follows, concerning the Reformation of Religion and Society, as we shall see presently.

## NOTES.

VER. 262. — *and heav'n on pride.*) This might be very well said of those times, when no one was content to go to heaven without being received there on the footing of a God.

The same Self-love, in all, becomes the cause  
 Of what restrains him, Government and Laws.  
 For, what one likes if others like as well,  
 What serves one will, when many wills rebel?  
 How shall he keep, what, sleeping or awake, 275  
 A weaker may surprise, a stronger take?  
 His safety must his liberty restrain:  
 All join to guard what each desires to gain.  
 Forc'd into virtue thus by Self-defence,  
 Ev'n Kings learn'd justice and benevolence: 280  
 Self-love forsook the path it first pursu'd,  
 And found the private in the public good.

'Twas then, studious head or gen'rous mind,  
 Follow'r of God or friend of human-kind,

## COMMENTARY.

VER. 283. *'Twas then the studious head, &c.* The poet hath now described the rise, perfection, and decay of civil Policy and Religion, in the more early times. But the design had been imperfect, had he here dropt his discourse: there was, in after ages, a recovery from their several corruptions. Accordingly, he hath chosen that happy Era for the conclusion of his song. But as good and ill Governments and Religions succeed one another without ceasing, he now leaveth facts, and turneth his discourse (from v. 282 to 295.) to speak of a more lasting reform of mankind, in the invention of those philosophic Principles, by whose observance a Policy and Religion may be for ever kept from sinking into Tyranny and Superstition:

## NOTES.

VER. 283. *'Twas then, &c.* The poet seemeth here to mean the polite and flourishing age of Greece; and those benefactors to Mankind, which he had principally in view, were Socrates and Aristotle; who, of all the pagan world, spoke best of God, and wrote best of Government.

Ep. III.      ESSAY ON MAN.      9

Poet or Patriot, rose but to restore      285  
 The Faith and Moral, Nature gave before;  
 Re-lum'd her ancient light, not kindled new;  
 If not God's image, yet his shadow drew:  
 Taught nor to slack, nor strain its tender strings,  
 The less, or greater, set so justly true,      291  
 That touching one must strike the other too;  
 Till jarring int'rests, of themselves create  
 Th' according music of a well-mix'd State.  
 Such is the World's great harmony, that springs 295

COMMENTARY.

'Twas then the studious head or gen'rous mind,  
 Follow'r of God, or friend of human kind,  
 Poet or Patriot, rose but to restore  
 The Faith and Moral, Nature gave before; &c.

The easy and just transition into this subject from the foregoing, is admirable. In the foregoing he had described the effects of Self-love; and now, with great art, and high probability, he maketh *Mens observations* on these effects the occasion of those discoveries which they have made of the true principles of Policy and Religion, described in the present paragraph; and this he evidently hinteth at in that fine transition,

'Twas then, the studious head, &c.

VER. 295. *Such is the World's great harmony. &c.*) Having thus described the true principles of civil and ecclesiastical Policy, he proceedeth (from v. 294 to 303.) to illustrate his account by the similar harmony of the Universe;

Such is the World's great harmony, that springs  
 From Order, Union, full Consent of things:

NOTES.

VER. 295. *Such is the World's great harmony. &c.*) An harmony very different from the pre-established harmony of the cele-

From Order, Union, full Consent of things:  
 Where small and great, where weak and mighty, made  
 To serve, not suffer, strengthen, not invade;  
 More pow'rful each as needful to the rest,

## COMMENTARY.

Thus, as in the beginning of this epistle he supported the great principle of mutual Love or Association in *general*, by considerations drawn from the properties of *Matter*; and the mutual dependence between *vegetable* and *animal* life: so, in the conclusion, he had enforced the *particular* principles of Civil and Religious Society, from that *universal Harmony* which springs, in part, from those properties and dependencies.

## NOTES.

brated Leibnitz, which establisheth a Fatalism destructive of all Religion and Morality. Yet hath the poet been accused of espousing that impious whimsy. The *pre-established harmony* was built upon, and is an outrageous extension of a conception of Plato; who, combating the atheistical objections about the *origin of Evil*, employs this argument in the defence of Providence; „That amongst an infinite number of possible worlds in God's idea, this, „which he hath created and brought into being, and which admits of a mixture of Evil, is the best. But if the best, then „Evil consequently is partial, comparatively small, and tendeth to „the greater perfection of the whole.„ This Principle is espoused and supported by Mr. Pope with all the power of reason and poetry. But neither was Plato a Fatalist, nor is there any fatalism in the argument. As to the truth of the notion, that is another question; and how far it clearth up the very difficult controversy about the origin of Evil, is still another. That it is a full solution of all difficulties, I cannot think; for reasons too long to be given in this place. Perhaps we shall never have a full solution in this world: and it may be no great matter though we have not, as we are demonstrably certain of the moral attributes of the Deity. However, Mr. Pope may be justified in recei-



And, in proportion as it blesses, blest;      300  
 Draw to one point, and to one centre bring  
 Beast, Man, or Angel, Servant, Lord, or King.

## NOTES.

ving and inforcing this Platonic notion, as it hath been adopted by the most celebrated and orthodox divines both of the ancient and modern church.

This doctrine, we own then, was taken up by Leibnitz; but it was to ingraft upon it a most pernicious fatalism. Plato said, God *chose* the best: Leibnitz said, he *could not but* chuse the best. Plato supposed freedom in God to chuse one of two things equally good: Leibnitz held the supposition to be absurd: but however, admitting the case, he maintained that God could *not* chuse one of two things equally good. Thus it appears, the first went on the system of *Freedom*; and that the latter, notwithstanding the most artful disguises in his Theodicee, was a thorough *Fatalist*: For we cannot well suppose he would give that freedom to Man which he had taken away from God. The truth of the matter seems to be this; he saw, on the one hand, the monstrous absurdity of supposing with Spinoza, that blind Fate was the author of a coherent Universe; but yet, on the other, could not conceive with Plato, that God could foresee and conduct, according to an archetypal idea, a World, of all possible Worlds the best, inhabited by *free Agents*. This difficulty therefore, which made the Socinians take Prescience from God, disposed Leibnitz to take Free-will from Man: And thus he fashioned his fantastical hypothesis; he supposed that when God made the body, he impressed on his new created Machine a certain series or suite of *motions*; and that when he made the fellow-soul, a correspondent series of *ideas*, whose operations, throughout the whole duration of the union, so exactly jumped, that whenever an *idea* was excited, a concordant *motion* was ever ready to satisfy the volition. Thus, for instance, when the mind had the *will* to raise the arm to the head, the body was so pre-contrived, as to raise, at that very moment, the part required. This he called the PRE-ESTABLISHED HARMONY; and, with this, he promised to do wonders.

For forms of Government let fools contest;  
Whate'er is best administer'd is best:

## COMMENTARY.

VER. 303. *For Forms of Government let fools contest;*) But now the poet, having so much commended the invention and inventors of the philosophic principles of Religion and Government, lest an evil use should be made of this, by Mens resting in theory and speculation, as they have been always too apt to, do in matters whose *practice* makes their happiness, he cautions his reader (from v. 302 to 311.) against this error. The reasonableness of this reproof will appear evident enough to those who know, that mad disputes about Liberty and Prerogative had once well nigh overturned our Constitution; and that others about Mystery and Church Authority had almost destroyed the very spirit of our Religion.

## NOTES.

VER. 303. *For Forms of Government, &c.*) These fine lines have been strangely misunderstood: the author against his own express words, against the plain sense of his system, has been conceived to mean. That all Governments and all Religions were, as to their forms and objects, indifferent. But as this wrong judgment proceeded from ignorance of the reason of the reproof, as explained above, that explanation is alone sufficient to rectify the mistake.

However, not to leave him under the least suspicion in a matter of so much importance, I shall justify the sense here given to this passage more at large: *First*, by considering the words themselves; and then, by comparing this mistaken sense with the context.

The poet, we may observe, is here speaking, not of civil Society *at large*, but of a *just* legitimate Policy:

Th' according music of a *well-mix'd State*.  
Now mix'd States are of various kinds; in some of which the Democratic, in others the Aristocratic, and in others the Mo-

For Modes of Faith let graceless zealots fight; 305  
His can't be wrong whose life is in the right:

## NOTES.

narchic form prevails. Now as each of these mix'd Forms is equally legitimate, as being founded on the principles of natural Liberty, that man is guilty of the highest folly, who chuseth rather to employ himself in a speculative contest for the superior excellence of one of these *Forms* to the rest, than in promoting the good administration of that settled *Form* to which he is subject. And yet all our warm disputes about Government, have been of this kind. Again, if by *Forms* of Government, must needs be meant legitimate Government, because that is the subject under debate; then by *Modes* of Faith, which is the correspondent idea, must needs be meant the modes or explanations of the True Faith, because the author is here too on the subject of true Religion:

Relum'd her ancient light, not kindled new.

Besides, the very expression (than which nothing can be more precise) confineth us to understand, by *Modes* of Faith; those human explanations of Christian Mysteries, in contesting which, Zeal and Ignorance have so perpetually violated Charity.

Secondly, If we consider the context; to suppose him to mean, that all *Forms* of Government are indifferent, is making him directly contradict the preceding paragraph; where he extols the Patriot for discriminating the *true* from the *false* modes of Government. He, says the poet,

Taught Pow'r's due use to People and to Kings,  
Taught not to slack, nor strain its tender strings;  
The less and greater set so justly true,  
That touching one must strike the other too;  
'Till jarring int'rests of themselves create  
Th' according music of a well-mix'd State.

Here he recommendeth the *true* Form of Government, which is the *mix'd*. In another place he as strongly condemneth the *false*, or the absolute *jurg divino* Form:

In Faith and Hope the world will disagree,  
But all Mankind's concern is Charity :

## NOTES.

For Nature knew no right divine in Men.

But the Reader will not be displeased to see the Poet's own apology, as I find it written in the year 1740, in his own hand, in the margin of a book, where he found these two celebrated lines misapplied. „The author of these lines was far from meaning that no one form of Government is, in itself, better than „another (as, that mixed or limited Monarchy, for example, is „not preferable to absolute) but that no form of Government, „however excellent or preferable, in itself, can be sufficient to „make a People happy, unless it be administered with integrity. „On the contrary, the best sort of Government, when the form „of it is preserved, and the administration corrupt, is most dangerous. „

Again, to suppose the Poet to mean, that all Religions are indifferent, is an equally wrong as well as uncharitable suspicion. Mr. Pope, though his subject in this *Essay on Man* confineth him to Natural religion (his purpose being to vindicate God's natural dispensations to Mankind against the Atheist) yet giveth frequent intimations of a more sublime dispensation, and even of the necessity of it; particularly in his second epistle (v. 149, &c.) where he confesseth the weakness and insufficiency of human Reason.

And in this fourth epistle, where, speaking of the good Man, the favourite of Heaven, he sayeth,

For him alone Hope leads from goal to goal;  
And opens still, and opens on his soul;  
Till, lengthen'd on to Faith, and unconfin'd,  
It pours the bliss that fills up all the Mind.

But Natural Religion never lengthened Hope on to Faith; nor did any Religion, but the Christian, ever conceive that Faith could fill the Mind with Happiness.

Lastly, in this very epistle, and in this very place, speaking of the great Restorers of the religion of Nature, he intimates that they could only draw God's shadow, not his image;



All must be false that thwart this One great End;  
And all of God, that bless Mankind or mend. 310

NOTES.

Re-lum'd her ancient light, not kindled new,  
If not God's image, yet his shadow drew:

as reverencing that truth, which telleth us, this discovery was reserved for the glorious Gospel of Christ; who is the image of God. 2 Cor. iv. 4.

VER. 305. For Modes of Faith let graceless zealots fight;) These latter Ages have seen so many scandalous contentions for modes of Faith, to the violation of Christian Charity, and dishonour of sacred Scripture, that it is not at all strange they should become the object of so benevolent and wise an Author's resentment.

But that which he here seemed to have more particularly in his eye was the long and mischievous squabble between W— and JACKSON, on a point confessedly above Reason, and amongst those adorable mysteries, which it is the honour of our Religion to find unfathomable. In this, by the weight of answers and replies, redoubled upon one another without mercy, they made so profound a progress that the *One* proved, nothing hindered, in Nature, but that *the Son might have been the Father*; and the *Other*, that nothing hindered, in Grace, but that *the Son may be a mere Creature*. But if, instead of throwing so many Greek Fathers at one another's heads, they had but chanced to reflect on the sense of one Greek word, ΑΙΕΙΠΑ, that it signifies both INFINITY and IGNORANCE, this single equivocation might have saved them ten thousand, which they expended in carrying on the controversy. However those *Mists* that magnified the Scene, enlarged the Character of the Combatants: and no body expecting common sense on a subject where we have no ideas, the defects of dulness disappeared, and its advantages (for, advantages it has) were all provided for.

The worst is, such kind of Writers seldom know when to have done. For writing themselves up into the same delusion with their Readers, they are apt to venture out into the more open paths of Literature, where their reputation, made out of

Man, like the gen'rous vine, supported lives;  
 The strength he gains is from th' embrace he gives.  
 On their own Axis as the Planets run,  
 Yet make at once their circle round the Sun;

## COMMENTARY.

VER. 311. *Man, like the gen'rous vine, &c.*) Having thus largely considered Man in his social capacity, the poet, in order to fix a momentous truth in the mind of his reader, concludes the Epistle in recapitulating the *two Principles* which concur to the support of this part of his character, namely, Self-love and Social; and shewing that they are only two different motions of the appetite to Good; by which the Author of Nature hath enabled Man to find his own happiness in the happiness of the Whole. This he illustrates with a thought as sublime as that general harmony he describes:

On their own Axis as the Planets run,  
 Yet make at once their circle round the Sun;  
 So two consistent motions act the Soul;  
 And one regards Itself, and one the Whole.

Thus God and Nature link'd the gen'ral frame,  
 And bade Self-love and Social be the same.

For he hath the art of converting poetical ornament into philosophic reasoning; and of improving a simile into an analogical argument; of which more in our next.

## NOTES.

that stuff, which Lucian calls *Σκότος ὀλόχερος*, presently falls from them, and their nakedness appears. And thus it fared with our two Worthies. The world, which must have always something to amuse it, was now in good time grown weary of its play-things, and caught at a new object that promised them more agreeable entertainment. Tindal, a kind of Bastard-Socrates, had brought our speculations from *Heaven* to *Earth*: and, under the pretence of advancing the Antiquity of Christianity, laboured to undermine its original. This was a controversy that required another management. Clear sense, severe, reasoning a thorough

Ep. III. ESSAY ON MAN. 101

So two consistent motions act the Soul; 315  
And one regards itself, and one the Whole.

Thus God and Nature link'd the gen'ral frame,  
And bade Self-love and Social be the same.

NOTES.

knowledge of prophane and sacred Antiquity, and an intimate acquaintance with human Nature, were the qualities proper for such as engaged in this Subject. A very unpromising adventure for these metaphysical nurslings, bred up under the shade of chimeras. Yet they would needs venture out. What they got by it was only to be once well laughed at, and then forgotten. But one odd circumstance deserves to be remembered; tho' they wrote not, we may be sure, in concert, yet each attacked his Adversary at the same time, fastened upon him in the same place, and mumbled him with just the same toothless rage. But the ill success of this escape soon brought them to themselves. The One made a fruitless effort to revive the old game, in a discourse on *The importance of the doctrine of the Trinity*; and the Other has been ever since, till very lately, rambling in SPACE,

This short history, as insignificant as the subjects of it are, may not be altogether unuseful to posterity. Divines may learn by these examples to avoid the mischiefs done to Religion and Literature thro' the affectation of being wise above what is written, and knowing beyond what can be understood.





# A R G U M E N T O F E P I S T L E I V.

*Of the Nature, and State of Man with respect to  
Happiness.*

I. *FALSE* Notions of Happiness, Philosophical and Popular, answered from v. 19 to 77. II. It is the End of all Men, and attainable by all, v. 30. God intends Happiness to be equal; and so to be so, it must be social, since all particular Happiness depends on general, and since he governs by general, not particular Laws, v. 37. As it is necessary for Order, and the peace and welfare of Society, that external goods should be unequal, Happiness is not made to consist in these, v. 51. But, notwithstanding that inequality, the balance of Happiness among Mankind is kept even by Providence, by the two Passions of Hope and Fear, v. 70. III. What the Happiness of Individuals is, as far as is consistent with the constitution of this world; and that the good Man has here the advantage; v. 77. The error of imputing to Virtue what are only the calamities of Nature, or of Fortune, v. 94. IV. The folly of expecting that God should alter his general Laws in favour of particulars, v. 221. V. That we are not judges who are good; but that, whoever they are, they must be happiest, v. 133, &c. VI. That external goods, are not the proper rewards, but often inconsistent with, or destructive of Virtue, v. 165. That even these can make no Man happy without Virtue: Instanced in Riches, v. 183. Honours, v. 191. Nobility, v. 203. Greatness, v. 215. Fame, v. 235. Superior Talents, v. 257, &c. With pictures of human Infelicity in Men possessed of them all, v. 267. &c. VII. That Virtue only constitutes a Happiness, whose object is universal, and whose prospect eternal, v. 307, &c. That the perfection of Virtue and Happiness consists in a conformity the ORDER of PROVIDENCE here, and a Resignation to it here and hereafter, v. 326, &c.





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*Know then this Truth (enough for Man to know)  
Virtue alone is Happiness below.*

*Ep. on Man Ep. IV.*

## EPISTLE IV.

OH HAPPINESS! our being's end and aim!  
 Good, Pleasure, Ease, Content! whate'er thy name:  
 That something still which prompts th' eternal sigh,

### VARIATIONS.

VER. 1. *Oh Happiness, &c.* in the MS. thus,

Oh Happiness! to which we all aspire,  
 Wing'd with strong hope, and borne by full desire;  
 That ease, for which in want, in wealth we sigh:  
 That ease, for which we labour and we die.

### COMMENTARY.

THE two foregoing epistles having considered Man with regard to the *Means* (that is, in all his relations, whether as an Individual, or a Member of Society) this last comes to consider him with regard to the *End*; that is, Happiness.

It opens with an Invocation to Happiness, in the manner of the ancient poets, who, when destitute of a patron God, applied to the Muse, and, if she was engaged, took up with any simple Virtue next at hand, to inspire and prosper their undertakings. This was the ancient Invocation, which few modern poets have had the art to imitate with any degree either of spirit or decorum: but our author hath contrived to make it subservient to the method and reasoning of his philosophic composition, I will endeavour to explain so uncommon a beauty.

It is to be observed that the Pagan deities had each their several names and places of abode, with some of which they were supposed to be more delighted than others, and consequently to be then most propitious when invoked by the favourite name and place. Hence we find; the hymns of Homer, Orpheus, and Callimachus to be chiefly employed in reckoning up the several

For which we bear to live, or dare to die,  
Which still so near us, yet beyond us lies, 5  
O'er-look'd, seen double, by the fool, and wife.

## COMMENTARY.

names and places of abode by which the patron God was distinguished. Our poet hath made these two circumstances serve to introduce his subject. His purpose is to write of Happiness: method therefore requires that he first define what men mean by Happiness, and this he does in the ornament of a poetic Invocation; in which the several names, that *happiness* goes by, are enumerated.

Oh Happiness! our being's end and aim,  
Good, Pleasure, Ease, Content! whate'er thy Name:

After the Definition, that which follows next, is the Proposition, which is, *that human Happiness consists not in external Advantages, but in Virtue*. For the subject of this epistle is the detecting the *false* notions of Happiness, and settling and explaining the *true*; and this the poet lays down in the next sixteen lines. Now the enumeration of the several *situations* in which Happiness is supposed to reside, is a summary of *false* Happiness, placed in *Externals*:

Plant of celestial seed! if dropt below,  
Say, in what mortal soil thou deign'st to grow?  
Fair op'ning to some Court's propitious shine,  
Or deep with Di'monds in the flaming mine,  
Twin'd with the wreaths Parnassian laurels yield,  
Or reap'd in iron harvests of the field?

## NOTES.

VER. 6. *O'erlook'd, seen double,*) *O'erlook'd* by those who place Happiness in any thing exclusive of Virtue; *seen double* by those who admit any thing else to have a share with Virtue in procuring Happiness; these being the two general mistakes that this epistle is employed in confuting.



Plant of celestial seed! if dropt below,  
 Say, in what mortal soil thou deign'ſt to grow?  
 Fair op'ning to ſome Court's propitious ſhine;  
 Or deep with di'monds in the flaming mine?      10  
 Twin'd with the wreaths Parnaffian lawrels yield,  
 Or reap'd in iron harveſts of the field?  
 Where grows? --- where grows it not? If vain our toil,  
 We ought to blame the culture, not the ſoil:  
 Fix'd to no ſpot is happineſs ſincere,      15  
 'Tis no where to be found, or ev'ry where;  
 'Tis never to be bought, but always free,  
 And fled from monarchs, St. JOHN! dwells with thee,  
 Ask of the Learn'd the way? The Learn'd are blind;  
 This bids to ſerve, and that to ſhun mankind;      20

## COMMENTARY

The ſix remaining lines deliver the *true* notion of Happineſs to be in Virtue. Which is ſummed up in theſe two:

Fix'd to no ſpot is Happineſs ſincere,

'Tis no where to be found, or ev'ry where.

The Poet having thus defined his terms, and laid down his propoſition, proceeds to the ſupport of his Theſis; the various arguments of which make up the body of the Epistle.

VER. 19. *Ask of the Learn'd, &c.* He begins (from v. 18 to 29.) with detecting the falſe notions of Happineſs. Theſe are of two kinds; the *Philofophical* and *Popular*: The latter he hath re-capitulated in the invocation, when happineſs was called upon at her ſeveral ſuppoſed places of abode; the *Philofophic* only remained to be delivered:

Ask of the Learn'd the way, the Learn'd are blind;

This bids to ſerve, and that to ſhun Mankind:

Some place the bliſs in action, ſome in eaſe;

Thoſe call it Pleaſure, and Contentment theſe,

Some place the bliss in action, some in ease,  
Those call it Pleasure, and Contentment these,

## COMMENTARY.

They differed as well in the means, as in the nature of the end. Some plac'd Happiness in Action, some in Contemplation; the first called it Pleasure, the second Ease. Of those who plac'd it in Action and called it Pleasure, the moral rout they pursued either sunk them into *sensual pleasures*, which ended in Pain: or led them in search of *imaginary perfections*, unsuitable to their nature and station (see Ep. i.) which ended in *Vanity*. Of those who plac'd it in Ease, the contemplative station they were fixed in made some, for their quiet, find truth in *every thing*, others in *nothing*.

Who thus define it, say they more or less

Than this, that Happiness is Happiness?

The confutation of these Philosophic errors he shews to be very easy, one common fallacy running through them all; namely this, that instead of telling us in what the Happiness of *human nature* consists, which was what was asked of them, each busies himself in explaining in what he plac'd *his own*.

## NOTES.

VER, 21. *Some place the bliss in action, — Some sunk to beasts, &c.* 1. Those who place Happiness, or the *summum bonum*, in Pleasure, Ἠδονή, such Cyrenaic sect; called on that account the Hedonic. 2. Those who place it in a certain tranquillity or calmness of Mind, which they call Εὐθυμία, such as the Democritic sect. 3. The Epicurean. 4. The Stoic. 5. The Protagorean, which held that Man was πάντων χρημάτων μέτρον, the measure of all things; for that all things which appear to him are, and those things which appear not to any Man are not; so that every imagination or opinion of every man was true. 6. The Sceptic: Whose absolute Doubt is with great judgment said to be the effect of Indolence, as well as the absolute Trust of the Protagorean: For the same dread of labour attending the search of truth, which

Some sunk to beasts, find pleasure end in pain;  
Some swell'd to Gods, confess ev'n Virtue vain;  
Or indolent, to each extreme they fall.      25  
To trust in ev'ry thing, or doubt of all.

Who thus define it, say they more or less  
Than this, that Happiness is Happiness?

Take Nature's path, and mad Opinion's leave;  
All states can reach it, and all heads conceive;      30  
Obvious her goods, in no extreme they dwell;  
There needs but thinking right, and meaning well;  
And mourn our various portions as we please,  
Equal is Common Sense, and Common Ease.

Remember, Man, "the Universal Cause      35  
"Acts not by partial, but by gen'ral laws;"

COMMENTARY.

VER. 29. *Take Nature's path, &c.*) Then Poet then proceeds (from v. 28 to 35.) to reform their mistakes; and shews them that, if they will but take the road of Nature and leave that of mad Opinion, they will soon find Happiness to be a good of the *species*, and, like Common Sense, equally distributed to all Mankind.

VER. 35. *Remember, Man, &c.*) Having exposed the two false species of Happiness, the *Philosophical* and *Popular*, and denounced the true, in order to establish the last, he goes on to a confutation of the two former.

NOTES.

makes the Protagorean presume it to be always at hand, makes the Sceptic conclude "it is never to be found. The only difference is, that the laziness of the one is desponding; and the laziness of the other sanguine; yet both can give it a good name, and call it Happiness.

VER. 23. *Some sunk to Beasts, &c.*) These four lines added in the last Edition, as necessary to complete the summary of the false pursuits after happiness amongst the Greek philosophers.

And makes what Happiness we justly call  
 Subsist not in the good of one, but all.  
 There's not a blessing Individuals find;  
 But some way leans and hearkens to the kind: 40  
 No Bandit fierce, no Tyrant mad with pride,  
 No cavern'd Hermit, rests self-satisfy'd:  
 Who most to shun or hate Mankind pretend,  
 Seek an admirer, or would fix a friend:  
 Abstract what others feel, what others think, 45  
 All pleasures sicken, and all glories sink:  
 Each has his share; and who would more obtain,  
 Shall find, the pleasure pays not half the pain.

ORDER is Heav'n's first law; and this confess,  
 Some are, and must be, greater than the rest, 50

## COMMENTARY.

I. He first (from v. 34 to 49.) confutes the *Philosophical*, which, as we said, makes Happiness a particular, not a general good: And this two ways; 1. From his grand principle, that God acts by general laws; the consequence of which is, that Happiness, which supports the well being of every system, must needs be universal; and not partial, as the Philosophers conceived. 2. From fact, that Man instinctively concurs with this designation of Providence, to make Happiness universal, by his having no delight in any thing uncommunicated or uncommunicable.

VER. 49. *Order is Heav'n's first law;*) II. In the second place (from v. 48 to 67.) he confutes the popular error concerning Happiness, namely, that it consists in Externals: Which he

## NOTES.

VER. 49. *Order is Heav'n's first law;*) i. e. The first law made by God relates to Order; which is a beautiful allusion to the Scripture history of the Creation, when God first appeased the disorders of Chaos, and separated the light from the darkness.



More rich, more wise; but who infers from hence  
 That such are happier, shocks all common sense.  
 Heav'n to Mankind impartial we confess,  
 If all are equal in their Happiness:  
 But mutual wants this Happiness increase;      55  
 All Nature's difference keeps all Nature's peace.

## VARIATIONS.

After VER. 52. in the MS.

Say not, „Heav'n's here profuse, there poorly sates,  
 „And for one Monarch makes a thousand slaves.,,  
 You'll find, when Causes and their Ends are known,  
 'Twas for the thousand Heav'n has made that one.

## COMMENTARY.

does, *first*, by inquiring into the reasons of the present providential disposition of external goods: A topic of confutation chosen with the greatest accuracy and penetration: For, if it appears they were distributed in the manner we see them, for reasons different from the Happiness of Individuals, it is absurd to think that they should make part of that Happiness.

He shews therefore, that disparity of external possessions among Men was for the sake of Society: I. To promote the Harmony and Happiness of a system; because the want of external goods in some, and the abundance in others, increase general Harmony in the obliger and obliged.

Yet here (says he) mark the impartial wisdom of Heaven; this very Inequality of Externals, by contributing to general Harmony and Order, produceth an Equality of Happiness amongst Individuals.

2. To prevent perpetual discord amongst men equal in power, which an equal distribution of external goods would necessarily occasion. From hence he concludes, that, as external goods were not given for the reward of Virtue, but for many different purposes, God could not, if he intended Happiness for all, place it in the Enjoyment of Externals.

NO ESSAY ON MAN. Ep. IV.

Condition, circumstance is not the thing;  
 Bliss is the same in subject or in king,  
 In who obtain defence, or who defend,  
 In him who is, or him who finds a friend: 60  
 'Heav'n breaths thro' ev'ry member of the whole  
 One common blessing, as one common soul.  
 But Fortune's gifts if each alike possess,  
 And each were equal, must not all contest?  
 If then to all men Happiness was meant,  
 God in Externals could not place Content,  
 Fortune her gifts may variously dispose,  
 And these be happy call'd, unhappy those;

VARIATIONS.

After VER. 66. in the MS.

'Tis peace of mind alone is at a stay;  
 The rest mad Fortune gives or takes away.  
 All other bliss by accident's debar'd;  
 But Virtue's, in the instant, a reward;  
 In hardest trials operates the best,  
 And more is relish'd as the more distress.

COMMENTARY.

VER. 67. *Fortune her gifts may variously dispose,*) His second argument (from v. 66 to 73.) against the popular error of Happiness being placed in Externals, is, that the Possession of them is inseparably attended with Fear; the want of them with Hope; which directly crossing all their pretensions to making happy, evidently shews that God had placed Happiness elsewhere. And hence, in concluding this argument, he takes occasion (from v. 72 to 77.) to upbraid the desperate folly and impiety of those, who, in spite of God and Nature, will yet attempt to place Happiness in Externals:

Oh sons of earth! attempt ye still to rise,  
 By mountains pil'd on mountains, to the skies?  
 Heav'n still with laughter the vain toil surveys,  
 And buries madmen in the heaps they raise.

Ep. IV.      ESSAY ON MAN.      III

But Heav'n's just balance equal will appear,  
While those are plac'd in Hope, and these in Fear: 70  
Not present good or ill, the joy or curse,  
But future views of better, or of worse.

Oh sons of earth! attempt ye still to rise,  
By mountains pil'd on mountains, to the skies?  
Heav'n still with laughter the vain toil surveys, 75  
And buries madmen in the heaps they raise.

Know, all the good that individuals find,  
Or God and Nature meant to mere Mankind,  
Reason's whole pleasure, all the joys of Sense,  
Lie in three words, Health, Peace, and Competence. 80  
But Health consists with Temperance alone;  
And Peace, o Virtue! Peace is all thy own.

COMMENTARY.

VER. 77. *Know, all the good, &c.*) The Poet having thus confuted the two errors concerning Happiness, *Philosophical* and *Popular*: and proved that true Happiness was neither solitary and partial, nor yet placed in externals; goes on (from v. 76 to 83.) to shew in what it doth consist. He had before said in general, and repeated it, that Happiness lay in common to the whole species. He now brings us better acquainted with it, in a more explicit account of its nature; and tells us, it is all contained in *Health, Peace, and Competence*; but that these are to be gain'd only by VIRTUE, namely, by Temperance, Innocence, and Industry.

NOTES.

VER. 79. *Reason's whole pleasure, &c.*) This is a beautiful periphrasis for Happiness, for all we feel of good is by *sensation* and *reflection*.

VER. 82. *And Peace, &c.*) *Conscious Innocence* (says the poet) is the only source of *internal Peace*; and *known Innocence*, of *external*; therefore, *Peace* is the sole issue of *Virtue*; or,

The good or bad the gifts of Fortune gain;  
 But these less taste them, as they worse obtain.  
 Say, in pursuit of profit or delight,      85  
 Who risk the most, that take wrong means, or right?  
 Of Vice or Virtue, whether blest or curst,  
 Which meets contempt, or which compassion first?  
 Count all th'advantage prosp'rous Vice attains,  
 'Tis but what Virtue flies from and disdains:      90

## COMMENTARY.

VER. 83. *The good or bad, &c.*) But hitherto the poet hath only considered *Health* and *Peace*:

But *Health* consists with *Temperance* alone;

And *Peace*, oh *Virtue*! *Peace* is all thy own.

One head yet remained to be spoken to, namely, *Competence*. In the pursuit of *Health* and *Peace* there is no danger of running into excess; but the case is different with regard to *Competence*: here *Wealth* and *Affluence* would be too apt to be mistaken for it, in *Mens* passionate pursuit after *external* goods. To obviate this mistake therefore, the poet shews (from v. 82 to 93.) that, as exorbitant wealth adds nothing to the Happiness arising from a *Competence*; so, as it is generally ill-gotten, it is attended with circumstances that weaken another part of this triple chord, namely *Peace*:

Reason's whole pleasure, all the joys of Sense,

Lie in three words, *Health*, *Peace*, and *Competence*.

But *Health* consists in *Temperance* alone;

And *Peace*, oh *Virtue*! *Peace* is all thy own.

## NOTES.

in his own emphatic words, *Peace is all thy own*; a conclusive observation in his argument, which stands thus: Is Happiness rightly placed in *Externals*? No: for it consists in *Health*, *Peace* and *Competence*. *Health* and *Competence* are the product of *Temperance*, and *Peace* of perfect *Innocence*.



And grant the bad what happiness they wou'd,  
One they must want, which is, to pass for good.

Oh blind to truth, and God's whole scheme below,  
Who fancy Bliss to Vice, to Virtue Woe!

Who sees and follows that great scheme the best, 95  
Best knows the blessing, and will most be blest.

But fools, the Good alone, unhappy call,

VARIATIONS.

After VER. 92. in the MS.

Let sober Moralists correct their speech,

No bad man's happy : he is great, or rich.

COMMENTARY.

VER. 93. *Oh blind to truth, &c.*) Our author having thus largely confuted the mistake of Happiness's consisting in externals, proceeds to expose the terrible consequences of such an opinion on the sentiments and practice of all sorts of men, making the Dissolute impious and atheistical; the Religious uncharitable and intolerant; and the Good restless and discontent. For when it is once taken for granted, that Happiness consists in externals, it is immediately seen that ill men are often more happy than good? which sets all conditions on objecting to the ways of Providence: and some even on rashly attempting to rectify its dispensations, though by the violation of all Law, divine and human. Now this being the most momentous part of the subject under consideration, is deservedly treated most at large. And here it will be proper to take notice of the art of the poet in making this confutation serve, at the same time, for a full solution of all objections which might be made to his main proposition, *that Happiness consists not in externals.*

I. He begins, first of all with the Atheistical complainers, and pursues their impiety, from v. 93 to 121

Oh! blind to truth! and God's whole scheme below. &c.

VER. 97. *But fools the good alone unhappy call, &c.*) He exposes their folly even on their own notions of external goods,

For ills or accidents that chance to all.  
 See FALKLAND dies, the virtuous and the just!  
 See god-like TURENNE prostrate on the dust! 100  
 See SIDNEY bleeds amid the martial strife!  
 Was this their Virtue, or Contempt of Life?  
 Say, was it Virtue, more tho' Heav'n ne'er gave,  
 Lamented DIGBY! sunk thee to the grave?  
 Tell me, if Virtue made the Son expire, 105  
 Why, full of days and honour, lives the Sire?  
 Why drew Marseille's good bishop purer breath,

## COMMENTARY.

I. By examples (from v. 98 to III.) where 'he shews, first, that if good men have been untimely cut off, this is not to be ascribed to their Virtues, but to a contempt of life that hurried them into dangers. Secondly, That if they will still persist in ascribing untimely death to Virtue: they must needs, on the same principle, likewise ascribe long life to it: consequently, as the argument, in fact, concludes both ways, in logic it concludes neither.

Say, was it Virtue, more tho' Heav'n ne'er gave,  
 Lamented Digby! sunk thee to the grave?  
 Tell me, if Virtue made the Son expire,  
 Why, full of days and honour, lives the Sire?

## NOTES.

VER. 100. See god-like Turenne.) This epithet has a peculiar justness; the great man to whom it is applied not being distinguished, from other generals, for any of his superior qualities so much as for his providential care of those whom he led to war; which was so uncommon; that his chief purpose in taking on himself the command of armies, seems to have been the Preservation of Mankind. In this god-like care he was more distinguishably employed throughout the whole course of that famous campaign in which he lost his life.

Ep IV.      ESSAY ON MAN.      115

When Nature sickend', and each gale was death!  
 Or why so long (in life if long can be)  
 Lent Heav'n a parent to the poor and me?      110  
 What makes all physical or moral ill?  
 There deviates Nature, and here wanders Will.

COMMENTARY.

VER. III. *What makes all physical or moral ill?*) 2. He exposes their folly (from v. 100 to 131.) by considerations drawn from the system of Nature; and these twofold, natural and moral. You accuse God, says he, because the good man is subject to natural and moral evil. Let us see whence these proceed: Natural evil is the necessary consequence of a material world so constituted: But that this constitution was best, we have proved in the first Epistle. Moral evil ariseth from the depraved will of Man: Therefore neither the one nor the other from God.

But you say (adds the poet, to these impious complainers) that though it be fit Man should suffer the miseries which he brings upon himself by the commission of moral evil, yet it seems unfit that his innocent posterity should bear a share of them. To this, says he, I reply,

We just as wisely might of Heav'n complain,  
 That righteous Abel was destroy'd by Cain;  
 As that the virtuous son is ill at ease.  
 When his lewd father gave the dire disease.

But you will still say, why doth not God either prevent, or immediately repair these evils? You may as well ask why he

NOTES.

VER. 110. *Lent Heav'n a parent, &c.*) This last instance of the poet's illustration of the ways of Providence, the reader sees, has a peculiar elegance; where a tribute of piety to a parent is paid in a return of thanks to, and made subservient of, his vindication of, the Great Giver and Father of all things. The Mother of the author, a person of great piety and charity, died the year this poem was finished, viz. 1733.

God sends not ill; if rightly understood,  
 Or partial Ill is universal Good;  
 Or Change admits, or Nature lets it fall;      115  
 Short, and but rare, till Man improv'd it all.  
 We just as wisely might of Heav'n complain  
 That righteous Abel was destroy'd by Cain,  
 As that the virtuous son is ill at ease  
 When his lewd father gave the dire disease.      120  
 Think we, like some weak Prince, th' Eternal Cause,  
 Prone for his fav'rites to reverse his laws?  
 Shall burning Ætna, if a sage requires,  
 Forget to thunder, and recall her fires?

## VARIATIONS.

After v. 116. in the MS.

Of ev'ry evil, since the world began,  
 The real source it is not in God, but man.

## COMMENTARY.

doth not work continual miracles, and every moment reverse the established laws of Nature:

Shall burning Ætna, if a sage requires, &c.

This is the force of the poet's reasoning; and these the men to whom he addresseth it; namely, the Libertine Cavillers against Providence.

## NOTES.

VER. 121. *Think we, like some weak Prince, &c.*) Agreeably hereunto, holy Scripture, in its account of things under the common Providence of Heaven, never represents miracles as wrought for the sake of him who is the object of them, but in order to give credit to some of God's extraordinary dispensations to Mankind.

VER. 123. *Shall burning Ætna, &c.*) Alluding to the fate of those two great Naturalists, Empedocles and Pliny, who both perished by too near an approach to Ætna and Vesuvius; while they were exploring the cause of their eruptions.



Ep IV.      ESSAY ON MAN.      117

On air or sea new motions be imprest,      125  
 Oh blameless Bethel! to relieve thy breast?  
 When the loose mountain trembles from on high,  
 Shall gravitation cease, if you go by?  
 Or some old temple, nodding to its fall,  
 For Chartres' head reserve the hanging wall?      130  
 But still this world (so fitted for the knave)  
 Contents us not. A better shall we have?

COMMENTARY.

VFR. 131. *But still this world &c.* II. But now, so unhappy is the condition of our corrupt nature, that these are not the only complainers. RELIGIOUS Men are but too apt, if not to speak out, yet sometimes secretly to murmur against Providence, and say, its ways are not equal; especially the more inordinately devoted to a sect or party are scandalized that the Just (for such they esteem themselves) who are to judge the world, have no better portion in their own inheritance: The poet therefore now leaves those more profligate complainers, and turns (from v. 130 to 149.) to the religious, in these words:

But still this world (so fitted for the knave) &c.

As the more Impious wanted external goods to be the reward of Virtue for the Moral man; so These want them for the Pious, in order to have a kingdom of the Just: To this the poet holds it sufficient to answer, Pray first agree among yourselves, who those Just are.

As this is the case, he bids them rest satisfied; remember his fundamental principle, that *whatever is, is right*; and content themselves (as their religion teaches them to profess a more than ordinary submission to the will of Providence) with that common answer which he, with so much reason and piety, gives to every kind of Complainer.

However, though there be yet no *kingdom of the Just*, there is still no kingdom of the Unjust; both the Virtuous and the Vicious (whatsoever becomes of those whom every sect calls the Faithful) have their shares in external goods; and what is more, the Virtuous have infinitely the most enjoyment of them.

A kingdom of the Just then let it be :  
 But first consider how those Just agree,  
 The good must merit God's peculiar care;      135  
 But who, but God, can tell us who they are?  
 One thinks on Calvin Heav'n's own spirit fell;  
 Another deems him instrument of hell;  
 If Calvin feel Heav'n's blessing, or its rod,  
 This cries there is, and that, there is no God.      140  
 What flocks one part will edify the rest,  
 Nor with one system can they all be blest.

## VARIATIONS.

After VER. 142. in some Editions,

Give each a System, all must be at strife;  
 What diff'rent Systems for a Man and Wife?

The joke, tho' lively, was ill plac'd, and therefore struck out  
 of the text.

## COMMENTARY.

— This world, 'tis true,

Was made for Cæsar — but for Titus too:

And which more blest? who chain'd his country? say,  
 Or he whose Virtue sigh'd to lose a day?

I have been the more solicitous to explain this last argument, and to shew *against whom* it is directed, because much depends upon it for the illustration of the sense, and the just defence of the poet. For if we suppose him still addressing himself to those IMPIOUS complainers, confuted in the forty preceding lines, we should make him guilty of a paralogism in the argument about the Just; and in the illustration of it by the case of Calvin. For then the Libertines ask, Why the Just, that is, the moral man, is not rewarded? The answer is, That none but God can tell, who the Just, that is, the truly faithful man, is. Where the Term is changed, in order to support the argument; for about the *truly moral man* there is no dispute; about the *truly*

The very best will variously incline,  
 And what rewards your Virtue, punish mine.  
 WHATEVER IS, IS RIGHT --- This world, 'tis true,  
 Was made for Cæsar --- but for Titus too: 146  
 And which more blest? who chain'd his country say,  
 Or he whose Virtue sigh'd to lose a day?  
 „But sometimes Virtue starves, while Vice is fed.,,  
 What then? Is the reward of Virtue bread? 150  
 That, Vice may merit, 'tis the price of toil;  
 The knave deserves it, when he tills the soil,  
 The knave deserves it, when he tempts the main,  
 Where folly fights for kings, or dives for gain.  
 The good man may be weak, be indolent; 155  
 Nor is his claim to plenty, but content  
 But grant him riches, your demand is o'er?

## COMMENTARY

*faithful* or the orthodox, a great deal. But take the poet right, as arguing here against RELIGIOUS complainers, and the reasoning is strict and logical. They ask, Why the truly faithful are not rewarded? he answereth, They may be. for aught you know; for none but God can tell who they are.

VER. 149. „*But sometimes Virtue starves, while Vice is fed.*„)

III. The poet, having dispatched these two species of murmurers, comes now to the third and still more pardonable sort, the *discontented* GOOD MEN, who lament only that Virtue starves, while Vice riots. To these he replies (from v. 148 to 157.) that admit this to be the case, yet they have no reason to complain, either of the good man's lot in particular, or of the dispensation of Providence in general. Not of the former, because Happiness, the reward of Virtue, consisteth not in Externals; nor of the latter, because ill men may gain wealth by commendable industry, good men want necessities through indolence or bad conduct.

VER. 157. *But grant him Riches, &c.*) But as modest as this complaint seemeth at first view, the poet next shews (from v. 156

„No --- shall the good want Health, the good want  
„Pow'r? „

Add Health, and Pow'r, and ev'ry earthly thing,  
„Why bounded Pow'r! why private! why no king? „  
Nay, why external for internal giv'n?      161

Why is not Man a God, and Earth a Heav'n?  
Who ask and reason thus, will scarce conceive  
God gives enough, while he has more to give:  
Immenſe the pow'r, immenſe were the demand;  
Say, at what part of nature will they ſtand?      166

What nothing earthly gives, or can deſtroy,  
The ſoul's calm ſun-ſhine, and the heart-felt joy,  
Is Virtue's prize: A better would you fix?

#### COMMENTARY.

to 167.) that it is founded on a principle of the *highest extravagance*, which will never let the diſcontented good man reſt, 'till he becomes as vain and fooliſh in his imaginations as the very worſt ſort of complainers. For that when once he begins to think he wants what in his due, he will never know where to ſtop. while God hath any thing to give.

VER. 167. *What nothing earthly gives, &c.*) But this is not all; he proveth next (from v. 166 to 185.) that theſe demands are not only unreaſonable, but in the *highest degree* abſurd likewiſe. For that thoſe very goods, if granted, would be the deſtruction of that Virtue for which they are demanded as a Reward. He concludes therefore on the whole, that,

What nothing earthly gives, or can deſtroy,  
The ſoul's calm-ſun-ſhine, and the heart-felt joy,  
Is Virtue's prize. —

And that to aim at other, which not only is of no uſe to us here, but, what is more, will be of none hereafter, is a paſſion like that of an Infant or a Savage, where the one is impatient for what he will ſoon deſpiſe, and the other makes a provision for what he can never want.



Ep. IV.      ESSAY ON MAN.      121

Then give Humility a coach and six,      170  
 Justice a Conq'ror's sword, or Truth a gown,  
 Or Public Spirit its great cure, a Crown.  
 Weak, foolish man! will Heav'n reward us there  
 With the same trash mad mortals wish for here?  
 The Boy and Man an individual makes,      176  
 Yet sigh'st thou now for apples and for cakes?  
 Go, like the Indian, in another life  
 Expect thy dog, thy bottle, and thy wife:  
 As well as dream such trifles are assign'd,  
 As toys and empires, for a god-like mind.      180  
 Rewards, that either would to Virtue bring  
 No joy, or be destructive of the thing:  
 How oft by these at sixty are undone  
 The virtues of a saint at twenty-one!  
 To whom can Riches give Repute, or Trust,      185

VARIATIONS.

After v. 172. in the MS.

Say, what rewards this idle world imparts,  
 Or fit for searching heads or honest hearts.

COMMENTARY.

VER. 185. *To whom can Riches give Repute, or Trust,*) The poet now enters more at large upon the matter: And still con-

NOTES.

VER. 177. *Go, like the Indian, &c.*) Alluding to the example of the Indian, in Epist. i. v. 99. and shewing, that that example was not given to discredit any rational hopes of future happiness, but only to reprove the folly of separating them from charity: as when

— Zeal, not Charity, became the guide,  
 And hell was built on spite, and heav'n on pride.

Content, or Pleasure, but the Good and Just?  
Judges and Senators have been bought for gold,  
Esteem and Love were never to be sold,

## COMMENTARY.

continuing his discourse to this third sort of complainers (whom he indulgeth, as much more pardonable than the first or second, in rectifying all their doubts and mistakes) he proves, both from reason and example, how unable any of those things are which the world most admires, to make a good man happy. For as to the Philosophic mistakes concerning Happiness, there being little danger of their making a general impression, he had, after a short confutation, dismissed them at once. But external goods are those Syrens which so bewitch the world with dreams of Happiness, that it is of all things the most difficult to awaken it out of its delusions; though, as he proves in an exact review of the most pretending, they dishonour bad men, and add no lustre to the good. That it is only this third and least criminal sort of complainers, against which the remaining part of the discourse is levelled, appeareth from the poet's so frequently addressing himself, while he inforceth his arguments in behalf of Providence, from henceforward to his friend.

1. He beginneth therefore (from v. 184 to 205.) with considering RICHES. 1. He examines, first, what there is of real value or enjoyment in them; and sheweth, they can give the good man only that very Contentment and that very Esteem and Love which he had before: And scornfully cries out to those of a different opinion,

Oh fool! to think God hates the Worthy mind,  
The lover and the love of human kind,  
Whose life is healthful, and whose conscience clear;  
Because he wants a thousand pounds a year!

2. Next he examines the imaginary value of Riches, as the fountain of Honour. For his adversaries objection standeth thus: — As Honour is the genuine claim of Virtue, and Shame the just retribution of Vice; and as Honour, in their opinion, follows Riches, and Shame Poverty; therefore the good man should be rich. He tells them in this they are much mistaken:

Ep. IV.      ESSAY ON MAN.      123

Oh fool! to think God hates the worthy mind,  
The lover and the love of human-kind,      190  
Whose life is healthful, and whose conscience clear,  
Because he wants a thousand pounds a year.

Honour and shame from no Condition rise;  
Act well your part, there all the honour lies.  
Fortune in Men has some small diff'rence made,      195  
One flaunts in rags, one flutters in brocade;  
The cobbler apron'd, and the parson gown'd,  
The frier hooded, and the monarch crown'd.  
„What differ more (you cry) than crown and cowl!„  
I'll tell you, friend! a wise man and a Fool.      200  
You'll find, if once the monarch acts the monk,  
Or, cobbler-like, the parson will be drunk,  
Worth makes the man; and want of it, the fellow;  
The rest is all but leather or prunella.      204

Stuck o'er with titles and hung round with strings,  
That thou may't be by kings, or whores of kings.

COMMENTARY.

Honour and shame from no Condition rise;

Act well your part, there all the honour lies.

What power then has Fortune over the Man? None at all; for as her favours can confer neither worth nor wisdom; so neither can her displeasure cure him of any of his follies. On his Garb indeed she hath some little influence; but his Heart still remains the same:

Fortune in Men has some small diff'rence made,

One flaunts in rags, one flutters in brocade.

But this *difference* extends no further than to the habit; the pride of heart is the same both in the *flaunter* and *flutterer*, as it is the poet's intention to insinuate by the use of those terms,

VER. 205. *Stuck o'er with titles, &c.* II. Then as to NOBILITY, by creation or birth; this too the poet shews (from

Boast the pure blood of an illustrious race,  
 In quiet flow from Lucrece to Lucrece:  
 But by your father's worth if your's you rate,  
 Count me those only who were good and great.  
 Go! if your ancient, but ignoble blood  
 Has crept thro' scoundrels ever since the flood,  
 Go! and pretend your family is young;  
 Nor own, your fathers have been fools so long.  
 What can ennoble fors, or slaves, or cowards? 215  
 Alas! not all the blood of all the HOWARDS.

Look next on Greatness; say where Greatness lies?  
 "Where, but among the Heroes and the Wife?"

#### VARIATIONS.

VER. 207. *Boast the pure blood, &c.*) in the MS. thus,  
 The richest blood, right-honourably old,  
 Down from Lucretia to Lucretia roll'd,  
 May swell thy heart and gallop in thy breast,  
 Without one dash of usher or of priest:  
 Thy pride as much despise all other pride  
 As Christ-Church once all colleges beside.

#### COMMENTARY.

v. 204 to 217.) is in itself as devoid of all real worth as the rest; because, in the first case, the Title is generally gain'd by no merit at all; in the second, by the merit of the first Founder of the family; which will generally, when reflected on, be rather the subject of Mortification than Glory.

VER. 217. *Look next on Greatness; &c.*) III. The poet in the next place (from v. 216 to 237.) unmasks the false pretences of GREATNESS; whereby it is seen that the *Hero* and *Politician* (the two characters that would monopolize that quality) after all their bustle effect only this, if they want Virtue, that the one proves himself a Fool, and the other a Knave: And Virtue they



Heroes are much the same, the point's agreed,  
From Macedonia's madman to the Swede,      220  
The whole strange purpose of their lives, to find

COMMENTARY.

but too generally want; the art of Heroism being understood to consist in Ravage and Desolation, and the art of Politics in Circumvention.

It is not success, therefore, that constitutes true Greatness; but the end aimed at, and the means which are employed: And if these be right, Glory will be the reward, whatever be the issue:

Who noble ends by noble means obtains,  
Or failing, smiles in exile or in chains,  
Like good Aurelius let him reign, or bleed  
Like Socrates, that man is great indeed.

NOTES.

VER. 219. *Heroes are much the same, &c.*) This character might have been drawn with greater force; and deserved, the poet's care. But Milton supplies what is here wanting.

They err who count it glorious to subdue  
By conquest far and wide, to over-run  
Large Countries, and in field great Battles win,  
Great Cities by assault. What do these worthies,  
But rob and spoil, burn, slaughter, and enslave  
Peaceable Nations, neighb'ring or remote,  
Made captive, yet deserving Freedom more  
Than those their Conqu'rors; who leave behind  
Nothing but ruin wheresoe'er they rove,  
And all the flourishing works of peace destroy?  
Then swell with pride, and must be titled Gods;  
'Till Conqu'ror Death discovers them scarce Men,  
Rolling in brutish Vices, and deform'd,  
Violent or shameful death their due reward.

*Par. Reg. B. iii.*

Or make, an enemy of all mankind!  
 Not one looks backward, onward still he goes,  
 Yet ne'er looks forward further than his nose.  
 No less alike the Politic and Wife;      225  
 All fly slow things, with circumspective eyes:  
 Men in their loose unguarded hours they take,  
 Not that themselves are wise, but others weak.  
 But grant that those can conquer, these can cheat;  
 'Tis phrase absurd to call a Villain Great:      230  
 Who wickedly is wise, or madly brave,  
 Is but the more a fool, the more a knave.  
 Who noble ends by noble means obtains,  
 Or failing, smiles in exile or in chains,  
 Like good Aurelius let him reign, or bleed      235  
 Like Socrates, that Man is great indeed.

What's Fame? a fancy'd life in others breath,  
 A thing beyond us, ev'n before our death.  
 Just what you hear, you have, and what's unknown  
 The same (my Lord) if Tully's, or your own.  
 All that we feel of it begins and ends      241  
 In the small circle of our foes or friends;  
 To all beside as much an empty shade

## COMMENTARY.

VER. 237. *What's Fame?*) IV. With regard to FAME, that still more fantastic blessing, he sheweth (from v. 236 to 259.) that all of it, besides what we hear ourselves, is merely nothing; and that even of this small portion, no more of it giveth the possessor a real satisfaction, than what is the fruit of Virtue. Thus he shews, that Honour, Nobility, Greatness, Glory, so far as they have any thing real and substantial, that is, so far as they contribute to the Happiness of the possessor, are the sole issue of Virtue; and that neither Riches, Courts, Armies, nor the Populace, are capable of conferring them.

An Eugene living, as a Cæsar, dead;      244  
 Alike or when, or where, they shone, or shine,  
 Or on the Rubicon, or on the Rhine.  
 A Wit's a feather, and a Chief a rod;  
 An honest Man's the noble work of God.  
 Fame but from death a villain's name can save,  
 As Justice tears his body from the grave;      250  
 When what t'oblivion better were resign'd,  
 Is hung on high, to poison half mankind.  
 All fame is foreign, but of true desert;  
 Plays round the head, but comes not to the heart;  
 One self-approving hour whole years out-weighs  
 Of stupid starers, and of loud huzzas:      256  
 And more true joy Marcellus exil'd feels,  
 Than Cæsar with a senate at his heels.

In Parts superior what advantage lies?  
 Tell (for You can) what is it to be wise?      260  
 'Tis but to know how little can be known;  
 To see all others faults, and feel our own:  
 Condemn'd in bus'ness or in arts to drudge,  
 Without a second, or without a judge:  
 Truths would you reach, or save a sinking land?  
 All fear, none aid you, and few understand.      266

## COMMENTARY.

VER. 259. *In Parts superior what advantage lies?* V. But lastly, the poet proves (from v. 258 to 269.) that as *no external goods* can make man happy, so neither is it in the power of *all internal*. For that even SUPERIOR PARTS bring no more real Happiness to the possessor than the rest; nay, that they put him into a worse condition; for that the quickness of apprehension and depth of penetration do but sharpen the miseries of life.

Painful preheminance! yourself to view  
Above life's weakness, and its comforts too.

Bring then these blessings to a strict account;  
Make fair deductions; see to what they mount:

#### COMMENTARY.

VER. 269. *Bring then these blessings to a strict account; &c.*  
Having thus proved how empty and unsatisfactory all these greatest external goods are, from an examination of their nature; he proceeds to strengthen his argument (from v. 268 to 309.) by these three further considerations:

1. That the acquirement of these goods is made with the loss of one another, or of greater; either as inconsistent with them, or as spent in attaining them.

2. That the possessors of each of these goods are generally such, as are so far from raising envy in a good man, that he would refuse to take their persons, though accompanied with their possessions: and this the poet illustrates by examples.

3. That even the possession of them all together, where they have excluded Virtue, only terminates in more enormous misery.

#### NOTES.

VER. 267. *Painful preheminance! &c.* This to his friend:—nor does it at all contradict what he had said to him concerning Happiness in the beginning of the epistle:

'Tis never to be bought, but always free,

And fled from Monarchs, St. John! dwells with thee.

For he is now proving that nothing either external to Man, or what is not in his own power and of his own acquirement, can make him happy here. The most plausible rival of Virtue is Knowledge: yet even this is so far from giving any degree of real Happiness, that it deprives man of those common comforts of life, which are a kind of support to us under the want of Happiness. Such as the more innocent of those delusions which he speaks of in the second Epistle:

Those painted clouds that beautify our days, &c.



How much of other each is sure to cost;      271  
 How each for other oft is wholly lost;  
 How inconsistent greater goods with these;  
 How sometimes life is risqu'd, and always ease:  
 Think, and if still the things thy envy call,      275  
 Say, would'st thou be the Man to whom they fall?  
 To sigh for ribbands if thou art so silly,  
 Mark how they grace Lord Umbra, or Sir Billy.  
 Is yellow dirt the passion of thy life?  
 Look but on Gripus, or on Gripus' wife.      280  
 If Parts allure thee, think how Bacon shin'd,  
 The wisest, brightest, meanest of mankind:

## NOTES.

Now Knowledge destroyeth all those comforts, by setting man above Life's weaknesses: So that in him, who thinketh to attain Happiness by Knowledge alone, independent of Virtue, the fable is reversed, and in a preposterous attempt to gain the substance, he loseth even the shadow. This I take to be the sense of this fine stroke of satire on the wrong pursuits, after Happiness.

VER. 281, 283. *If Parts allure thee, — Or ravish'd with the whiffling of a Name,*) These two instances are chosen with great judgment; the world; perhaps, doth not afford two other such. Bacon discovered and laid down those principles, by whose assistance, Newton was enabled to unfold the whole law of Nature. He was no less eminent for the creative power of his imagination, the brightness of his conceptions, and the force of his expression: Yet being legally convicted for bribery and corruption in the administration of Justice, while he presided in the supreme Court of Equity, he endeavoured to repair his ruined fortunes by the most profligate flattery to the Court: Which, from his very first entrance into it, he had accustomed himself to practise with a prostitution that disgraceth the very profession of letters.

Cromwell seemeth to be distinguished in the most eminent manner, with regard to his abilities, from all other great and

Or ravish'd with the whistling of a Name,  
 See Cromwell, damn'd to everlasting fame!  
 If all, united, thy ambition call, 285  
 From ancient story learn to scorn them all.  
 There, in the rich, the honour'd, fam'd, and great,  
 See the false scale of Happiness complete!  
 In hearts of Kings, or arms of Queens who lay,  
 How happy those to ruin, these betray. 290  
 Mark by what wretched steps their glory grows,  
 From dirt and sea-weed as proud Venice rose?  
 In each how guilt and greatness equal ran,  
 And all that rais'd the Hero, sunk the Man:  
 Now Europe's laurels on their brows behold, 295  
 But stain'd with blood, or ill exchange'd for gold:

## COMMENTARY.

wicked men, who have overturned the Liberties of their Country. The times, in which others succeeded in this attempt, were such as saw the spirit of Liberty suppressed and stifled, by a general luxury and venality: But Cromwell subdued his country, when this spirit was at its height, by a successful struggle against court-oppression; and while it was conducted and supported by a set of the greatest Geniuses for government the world ever saw embarked together in one common cause.

VER. 283. *Or ravish'd with the whistling of a Name,* And even this fantastic glory sometimes suffers a terrible reverse — *Sacheverel*, in his *Voyage to I-columbkil*, describing the church there, tells us, that „In one corner is a peculiar inclosure, in „which were the monuments of the kings of many different nations, as Scotland, Ireland, Norway, and the *Isle of Man*. „THIS (said the person who shewed me the place, pointing to „a plain stone) was the monument of the Great TEAGUE, „king of Ireland. I had never heard of him, and could not but „reflect of how little value is *Greatness*, that has barely left a „name scandalous to a nation, and a grave which the meanest of „mankind would never envy. „

Ep. IV      ESSAY ON MAN.      131

Then see them broke with toils, or sunk in ease,  
 Or infamous for plunder'd provinces.  
 Oh wealth ill-fated! which no act of fame  
 E'er taught to shine, or sanctify'd from shame!      300  
 What greater bliss attends their close of life?  
 Some greedy minion, or imperious wife.  
 The trophy'd arches, story'd halls invade  
 And haunt their slumbers in the pompous shade.  
 Alas! not dazzled with their noon-tide ray,      305  
 Compute the morn and ev'ning to the day;  
 The whole amount of that enormous fame,  
 A Tale, that blends their glory with their shame!  
 Know then this truth (enough for Man to know)  
 "Virtue alone is Happiness below."      310  
 The only point where human bliss stands still,  
 And tastes the good without the fall to ill;  
 Where only Merit constant pay receives,  
 Is blest in what it takes, and what it gives;  
 The joy unequal'd, if its end it gain,      315

COMMENTARY.

VER. 309. *Know then this Truth, &c.* Having thus at length shewn that Happiness consists neither in any external goods, nor in all kinds of internal (that is, such of them as are not of our own acquirement) nor yet in the visionary pursuits of the Philosophers, he concludes (from v. 308 to 311.) that it is to be found in VIRTUE ALONE.

VER. 311. *The only point where human bliss stands still, &c.* Hitherto the poet had proved, NEGATIVELY, that Happiness consists in Virtue, by shewing it consisted not in any other thing. He now (from v. 310 to 327.) proves the same POSITIVELY, by an enumeration of its Qualities, all naturally adapted to give and to increase human Happiness; as its Constancy, Capacity, Vigour, Efficacy, Activity, Moderation, and Self-sufficiency.

And if it lose, attended with no pain:  
 Without satiety, tho' e'er so blest'd,  
 And but more relish'd as the more distress'd:  
 The broadest mirth unfeeling Folly wears,  
 Less pleasing far than Virtue's very tears:      320  
 Good, from each object, from each place acquir'd,  
 For ever exercis'd, yet never tir'd;  
 Never elated, while one man's oppress'd;  
 Never dejected, while another's blest'd;  
 And where no wants, no wishes can remain,      325  
 Since but to wish more Virtue, is to gain,  
 See the sole bliss Heav'n could on all bestow!  
 Which who but feels can taste, but thinks can know:

## VARIATIONS.

After v. 316. in the MS.

Ev'n while it seems unequal to dispose,  
 And chequers all the good Man's joys with woes,  
 'Tis but to teach him to support each state,  
 with patience this, with moderation that;  
 And raise his base on that one solid joy,  
 Which conscience gives, and nothing can destroy.

These lines are extremely finished. In which there is such a soothing sweetness in the melancholy harmony of the verification, as if the poet was then in that tender office in which he was most officious, and in which all his Soul came out, the condoling with some good man in affliction.

## COMMENTARY.

VER. 327. *See the sole bliss Heav'n could on all bestow!*  
 Having thus proved that Happiness is really placed in *Virtue*; he proves next (from v. 326 to 329.) that it is *rightly* placed there; for that then, and then only, ALL may partake of it; and ALL be capable of relishing it.



Ep. IV.      ESSAY ON MAN.      133

Yet poor with fortune, and with learning blind,  
 The bad must miss; the good, untaught, will find;  
 Slave to no sect, who takes no private road,      331  
 But looks thro' Nature, up to Nature's God;  
 Pursues that Chain which links th' immense design,  
 Joins heav'n and earth, and mortal and divine;  
 Sees, that no Being any bliss can know,      335  
 But touches some above, and some below;  
 Learns, from this union of the rising Whole,  
 The first, last purpose of the human soul;  
 And knows where Faith, Law, Morals, all began,  
 All end, in LOVE OF GOD, and LOVE OF MAN.      340  
 For him alone, Hope leads from goal to goal,

COMMENTARY.

VER. 329. *Yet poor with fortune, &c.*) The poet then observeth, with some indignation (from v. 328 to 341.) that as easy and as evident as this truth was, yet Riches and false Philosophy had so blinded the discernment even of improved minds, that the possessors of the first, placed Happiness in Externals, unsuitable to Man's Nature; and the followers of the latter, in refined Visions, unsuitable to his Situation: while the simpleminded man, with NATURE only for his guide, found plainly in what it should be placed.

VER. 341. *For him alone, Hope leads from goal to goal,*) But this is not all; the author shews further (from v. 340 to 353.) that when the simple-minded man, on his first setting out in the pursuit of Truth in order to Happiness, hath had the wisdom

To look thro' Nature up to Nature's God,

NOTES.

VER. 341. *For him alone, Hope leads from goal to goal, &c.*) PLATO, in his first book of a Republic, hath a remarkable passage to this purpose. „He whose conscience does not reproach

And opens still, and opens on his soul;  
 'Till lengthen'd on to FAITH, and unconfin'd,  
 It pours the bliss that fills up all the mind.

## COMMENTARY.

(instead of adhering to any sect or party, where there was so great odds of his chusing wrong) that then the benefit of gaining the knowledge of God's will *written in the mind*, is not confined there: for standing on this sure foundation, he is now no longer in danger of chusing wrong, amidst such diversities of Religions: but by pursuing this grand Scheme of universal Benevolence, in practice as well as theory, he arrives at length to the knowledge of the *revealed* will of God, which is the consummation of the system of benevolence:

For him alone, Hope leads from goal to goal,  
 And opens still, and opens on his soul,  
 'Till lengthen'd on to Faith, and unconfin'd,  
 It pours the bliss that fills up all the mind.

## NOTES.

„him, has cheerful *Hope*, for his companion, and the support „and comfort of his old age, according to Pindar. For this great „poet, O Socrates, very elegantly says, That he who leads a just „and holy life has always amiable *Hope* for his companion, which „fills his heart with joy, and is the support and comfort of his „old age. *Hope*, the most powerful of the Divinities, in govern- „ing the ever-changing and inconstant temper of mortal men. „*Τῷ δὲ μηδὲν εὐλῶ ἀδίκον ξυνειδότε ἡδεῖα ἐλπίς· αἰεὶ πᾶρσι, καὶ ἀγαθὴ γηροτρόφος, ὡς καὶ Πίνδαρος λέγει. Χαριέντως γάρ τοι, ὦ Σώκρατες, τῶτ' ἐκείνους εἶπεν, ὅτι ὃς ἂν δικαίως καὶ ὀσίως τὸν βίον διαγάγῃ, γλυκεῖά οἱ καρδίαν ἀτάλυσσα γηροτρόφος συναορᾷ ἐλπίς, ἢ μάλιστα θνατῶν πολύτροφον γνάμαν κροσεῖν.*  
 In the same manner Euripides speaks in his *Hercules furens*,

Οὗτος δ' ἀνὴρ ἄριστος, ὅστις ἐλπίσιν

Πέποιθεν αἰεὶ. τὸ δ' ἀπορεῖν, ἀνδρὸς κακῆ.      v. 105.

Ep. IV.      ESSAY ON MAN.      135

He sees, why Nature plants in Man alone      345  
 Hope of known bliss, and Faith in bliss unknown:  
 (Nature, whose dictates to no other kind  
 Are giv'n in vain, but what they seek they find)  
 Wise is her present; she connects in this  
 His greatest Virtue with his greatest Bliss;      350  
 At once his own bright prospect to be blest,  
 And strongest motive to assist the rest.

Self-love thus push'd to social, to divine,  
 Gives thee to make thy neighbour's blessing thine.

COMMENTARY.

VER. 353. *Self-love thus push'd to social, &c.*) The poet, in the last place, marks out (from v. 352 to 373.) the Progress of his good man's Benevolence, pushed through natural religion to revealed, 'till it arrives to that height which the sacred writers describe as the very summit of Christian perfection: And shews how the progress of *human* differs from the progress of *divine* benevolence. That the divine descends from *whole* to *parts*; but that the human must rise from *individual* to *universal*. His argument for this extended benevolence is, that, as God has made a whole, whose parts have a perfect relation to, and an entire dependency on each other, Man, by extending his benevolence throughout that Whole, acts in conformity to the will of his Creator; and therefore this Enlargement of his affection becomes a duty. But the poet hath not only shewn his piety in this observation, but the utmost art and address likewise in the disposition of it. The *Essay on Man* opens with exposing the murmurings and impious conclusions of foolish men against the present constitution of things: As it proceeds, it occasionally detects all those false principles and opinions that led them to

NOTES.

„He is the good man in whose breast Hope springs eternally:  
 „But to be without hope in the world is the portion of the  
 „wicked.,

Is this too little for the boundless heart?      355

Extend it, let thy enemies have part:

Grasp the whole worlds of Reason, Life, and Sense,  
In one close system of Benevolence:

Happier as kinder, in whate'er degree,

And height of Bliss but height of Charity.      360

God loves from Whole to Parts: But human soul  
Must rise from Individual to the Whole.

#### COMMENTARY.

conclude thus perversely. Having now done all that was necessary in Speculation, the author turns to Practice; and ends his Essay with the recommendation of an acknowledged virtue, Charity: which, if exercised in the *Extent* that conformity to the will of God requireth; would effectually prevent all complaints against the present order of things: such complaints being made with a total disregard to every thing but their *own private System*, and seeking remedy in the disorder, and at the expence of all the rest. This observation,

Self-love but serves the virtuous mind to wake,  
is important: Rochefoucault, Esprit, and their wordy disciple Mandeville, had observed that Self-love was the Origin of all those virtues Mankind most admire; and therefore foolishly supposed it was the End likewise: And so taught that the highest pretences to disinterestedness were only the more artful disguises of Self-love. But our author, who says somewhere or other,

Of human Nature, Wit its worst may write,

We all revere it in our own despite,      MS.

saw, as well as they and every body else, that the Passions began in Self-love; yet he understood human Nature better than to imagine they terminated there. He knew that Reason and Religion could convert Selfishness into its very opposite; and therefore teacheth that

Self-love but serves the virtuous mind to wake:

And thus hath vindicated the dignity of human Nature, and the philosophic truth of the Christian doctrine.



Ep.IV.      ESSAY ON MAN.      137

Self-love but serves the virtuous mind to wake,  
 As the small pebble stirs the peaceful lake;  
 The centre mov'd, a circle strait succeeds,      365  
 Another still, and still another spreads;  
 Friend, parent; neighbour, first it will embrace;  
 His country next; and next all human race;  
 Wide and more wide, th' o'erflowings of the mind—  
 Take ev'ry creature in, of ev'ry kind;      370  
 Earth smiles around, with boundless bounty blest,  
 And Heav'n beholds its image in his breast.

Come then, my Friend! my Genius! come along;  
 Oh master of the poet, and the song!      374

VARIATIONS.

VER. 373. *Come then, my Friend! &c.*) In the MS. thus,  
 And now transported o'er so vast a Plain,  
 While the wing'd courser flies with all her rein,

NOTES.

VER. 373. *Come then, my Friend! &c.*) This noble Apostrophe, by which the Poet concludes the Essay in an address to his friend, will furnish a Critic with examples of every one of those five Species of Elocution, from which, as from its Sources, Longinus deduceth the SUBLIME. a)

a) — πάντε πηγαί τινές εἰσιν τ' ὑψηλότητος.  
 1. Πρώτον μὲν καὶ κράτιστον τὸ περὶ τὰς νοήσεις ἀρετηβολόν. 2. Δεύτερον δὲ τὸ σφοδρὸν καὶ ἐνθουσιαστικὸν παθόν. 3. Ποιὰ τῶν σχημάτων πλάσις.  
 4. Ἡ γενναῖα φράσις. 5. Πέμπτη δὲ μεγέθους αἰτία, καὶ συγχλείδουσα τὰ πρὸ ἐαυτῆς ἅπαντα, ἢ ἐν ἀξιώματι καὶ διάρσει σύνθεσις.

And while the Muse now stoops, or now ascends,  
To Man's low passions, or their glorious ends,  
Teach me, like thee, in various nature wise,

#### VARIATIONS.

While heav'n-ward now her mounting wing she feels,  
Now scatter'd fools fly trembling from her heels,  
Wilt thou, my St. John! keep her course in fight,  
Confine her fury and assist her flight?

#### NOTES.

1. The first and chief is a *Grandeur and Sublimity of Conception*.

Come then, my Friend! my Genius! come along,  
O Master of the Poet, and the Song!  
And while the Muse now stoops, and now ascends,  
To Man's low passions, or their glorious ends.

2. The *Second*, that *Pathetic Enthusiasm*, which, at the same Time, melts and inflames:

Teach me, like thee, in various nature wise,  
To fall with dignity, with temper rise,  
Form'd by thy converse, happily to steer  
From grave to gay, from lively to severe;  
Correct with spirit, eloquent with ease,  
Intent to reason, or polite to please.

3. A certain elegant Formation and Ordonance of Figures:

O! while along the stream of Time thy name  
Expanded flies, and gathers all its fame,  
Say, shall my little bark attendant sail,  
Pursue the triumph, and partake the gale

4. A splendid Diction?

When statesmen, heroes, kings, in dust repose  
Whose sons shall blush their fathers were thy foes,  
Shall then this verse to future age pretend

To fall with dignity, with temper rise;  
 Form'd by thy converse, happily to steer  
 From grave to gay, from lively to severe; 380  
 Correct with spirit, eloquent with ease,  
 Intent to reason, or polite to please.  
 Oh! while along the stream of Time thy name  
 Expanded flies, and gathers all its fame;  
 Say, shall my little bark attendant sail, 385  
 Pursue the triumph, and partake the gale?  
 When statesmen, heroes, kings, in dust repose,  
 Whose sons shall blush their fathers were thy foes,  
 Shall then this verse to future age pretend  
 Thou wert my guide, philosopher, and friend? 390  
 That urg'd by thee, I turn'd the tuneful art  
 From sounds to things, from fancy to the heart;  
 For Wit's false mirror held up Nature's light;  
 Shew'd erring Pride, WHATEVER IS, IS RIGHT;

## COMMENTARY.

VER. 394. *Shew'd erring Pride, Whatever Is, is Right;*) The poet's address to his friend, which concludeth this epistle so no-

## NOTES.

Thou wert my guide, philosopher, and friend?  
 That, urg'd by thee, I turn'd the tuneful art,  
 From sounds to things, from fancy to the heart;  
 For Wit's false mirror held up Nature's light;

5. And *fitly*, which includes in itself all the rest, a Weight and Dignity in the Composition:

Shew'd erring Pride whatever *is*, is RIGHT;  
 That REASON, PASSION, answer *one great* AIM,  
 That true SELF-LOVE and SOCIAL are the SAME;  
 That VIRTUE only makes our BLISS below;  
 And all our knowledge is OURSELVES TO KNOW?

That REASON, PASSION, answer one great aim; 395  
That true SELF-LOVE and SOCIAL are the same;

## COMMENTARY.

bly, and endeth with a recapitulation of the general argument, affords me the following observation, with which I shall conclude these remarks. There is one great beauty that shines through the whole *Essay*: The Poet, whether he speaks of Man as an Individual, a Member of Society, or the Subject of Happiness, never misseth an opportunity, while he is explaining his state under any of these capacities, to illustrate it in the most artful manner by the inforcement of his grand Principle, *That every thing tendeth to the good of the Whole*, from whence his system receives the reciprocal advantage of having that grand Theorem realized by facts, and his facts justified on a principle of Right or Nature.

THUS I have endeavoured to analyse, and explain the exact reasoning of these four epistles. Enough I presume to convince every one, that it hath precision, force, and closeness of connection, rarely to be met with, even in the most formal treatises of Philosophy. Yet in doing this, it is but too evident I have destroyed that grace and energy which animates the original. And now let the reader believe, if he be so disposed; what a certain Critic upon this work insinuates to be his own opinion, „as well as that of his friends: „Some persons, says he, have „conjectured that Mr. Pope did not compose this *Essay* at once, „and in a regular order; but that after he had wrote several „fragments of poetry, all finished in their kind, (one for example, on the parallel between Reason and Instinct, another upon „Man's groundless Pride, another on the Prerogatives of human „Nature, another on Religion and Superstition, another on the „Original of Society, and several fragments besides on Self-love „and the Passions) he tacked these together as he could, and „divided them into four epistles; as, it is said, was the fortune „of Homer's *Rhapsodies*.; I suppose this will be believed as soon of one as of the other. But his French Poetical Translator is not behind hand with his Critic, in this judgment on their Author's work. „The only reason (says this translator) for which this „poem can be properly termed an *Essay*, is, that the author has



Ep. IV.    ESSAY ON MAN.    141

That VIRTUE only makes our Blifs below;  
And all our Knowledge is, OURSELVES TO KNOW.

VARIATIONS.

VER. 397. *That Virtue only, &c.*) in the MS. thus,  
That juſt to find a God is all we can,  
And all the Study of Mankind is Man.

COMMENTARY.

„not formed his plan with all the regularity of method which it  
„might have admitted,, — and again — „I was, by the unani-  
„mous opinion of all thoſe whom I have conſulted on this occa-  
„ſion, and amongſt theſe, of ſeveral *Engliſhmen* completely ſkil-  
„led in both languages, obliged to follow a different method. The  
„*French* are not ſatisfied with ſentiments, however beautiful, unleſs  
„they be methodically diſpoſed: Method being the Characteriſtic that  
„distinguishes our performances from thoſe of our Neighbours,, &c.  
It is enough juſt to have quoted theſe wonderful Men of me-  
thod, and to leave them to the laughter of the public.



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FATHER of All! in ev'ry Age,  
In ev'ry Clime ador'd,  
By Saint, by Savage, and by Sage,  
Jehovah, Jove, or Lord!

Yet gave me, in this dark Estate,  
To see the Good from Ill;  
And binding Nature fast in Fate,  
Left free the Human Will.

*Universal Prayer.*) It may be proper to observe, that some passages, in the preceding *Essay*, having been unjustly suspected of a tendency towards Fate and *Naturalism*, the author composed this Prayer as the sum of all, to shew that his system was founded in *free-will*, and terminated in piety: That the first cause was as well the Lord and Governor of the Universe as the Creator of it; and that, by submission to his will (the great principle enforced throughout the *Essay*) was not meant the suffering ourselves to be carried along by a blind determination; but the resting in a religious acquiescence, and confidence full of *Hope* and Immortality. To give all this the greater weight, the poet chose for his model the LORD'S PRAYER, which, of all others, best deserves the title prefixed to his Paraphrase.

146 UNIVERSAL PRAYER.

What Conscience dictates to be done,  
Or warns me not to do,  
This, teach me more than Hell to shun,  
That, more than Heav'n pursue.

What Blessings thy free Bounty gives,  
Let me not cast away;  
For God is paid when Man receives,  
T'enjoy is to obey.

Yet not to Earth's contracted Span  
Thy goodness let me bound,  
Or think Thee Lord alone of Man,  
When thousand Worlds are round:

Let not this weak, unknowing hand  
Presume thy bolts to throw,  
And deal damnation round the land,  
On each I judge thy Foe:

If I am right, thy grace impart,  
Still in the right to stay;  
If I am wrong, oh teach my heart  
To find that better way.

NOTES.

*If I am right, the grace impart, —  
If I am wrong, O teach my heart.)*

As the *imparting* grace on the christian system is a stronger exertion of the divine power, than the natural illumination of the heart, one would expect that *right* and *wrong* should change places; more aid being required to restore men to the *right* than to keep them in it. But as it was the poet's purpose to insinuate that Revelation was the *right*, nothing could better express his purpose than the making the *right* secured by the guards of *grace*.

Save me alike from foolish Pride,  
Or impious Discontent,  
At aught thy wisdom has deny'd,  
Or aught thy Goodness lent.

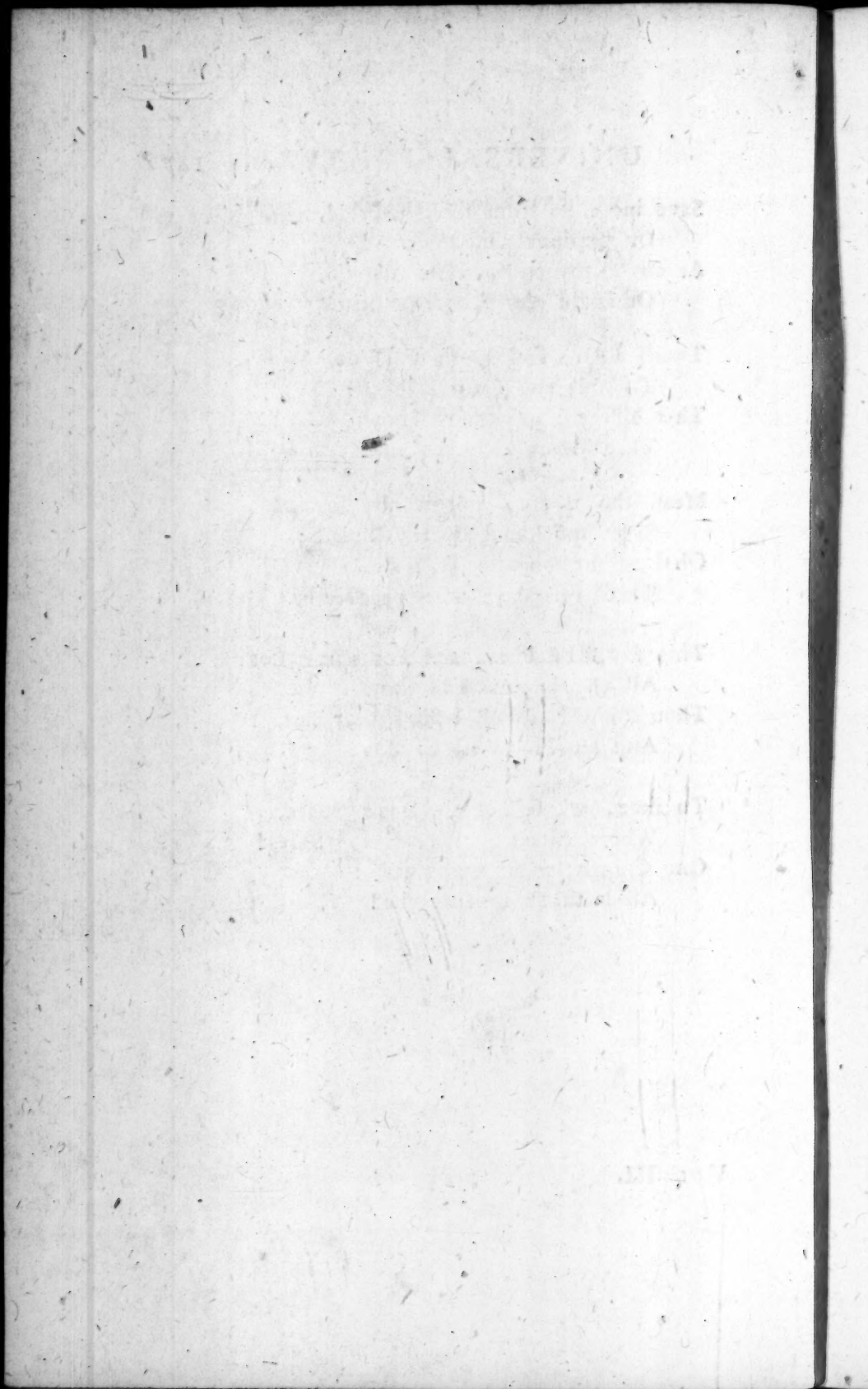
Teach me to feel another's Woe,  
To hide the Fault I see;  
That Mercy I to others show,  
That Mercy show to me.

Mean tho I am, not wholly so,  
Since quick'ned by thy Breath;  
Oh lead me wheresoe'er I go,  
Thro' this day's Life or Death,

This day, be Bread and Peace my Lot:  
All else beneath the Sun,  
Thou know'st if best bestow'd or not,  
And let Thy Will be done.

To thee, whose Temple is all Space,  
Whose Altar, Earth, Sea, Skies!  
One Chorus let all Being raise!  
All Nature's Incense rise!





# MORAL ESSAYS

IN

## FOUR EPISTLES

TO

### SEVERAL PERSONS.

---

Est brevitæ opus, ut currat sententia, neu se  
Impediat verbis lassis onerantibus aures :  
Et sermone opus est modo tristi, sæpe jocosæ,  
Defendente vicem modo Rhetoris atque Poetæ,  
Interdum urbani, parentis viribus, atque  
Extenuantis eas consultò.

HOR.







## MORAL ESSAYS.

## EPISTLE I.

TO

Sir RICHARD TEMPLE, Lord COBHAM.

## ARGUMENT

## Of the Knowledge and Characters of MEN,

*THAT* is is not sufficient for this knowledge to consider Man in the Abstract: Books will not serve the purpose, nor yet our own Experience singly, v. 1. General maxims, unless they be formed upon both, will be but notional, v. 10. Some Peculiarity in every man, characteristic to himself, yet varying from himself, v. 15. Difficulties arising from our own Passions, Fancies, Faculties, &c. v. 31. The shortness of Life, to observe in, and the uncertainty of the Principles of action in men, to observe by, v. 37, &c. Our own Principle of action often hid from ourselves, v. 41. Some few Characters plain, but in general confounded, dissembled, or inconsistent v. 51. The same man utterly different in different places and seasons, v. 71. Unimaginable weaknesses in the greatest, v. 80, &c. Nothing constant and certain but God and Nature, v. 95. No judging of the Motives from the actions; the same action proceeding from contrary Motives, and the same Motives influencing contrary actions, v. 100. II. Yet to form Characters, we can only take the strongest actions of a man's life, and try to make them agree: The utter uncertainty of this, from Nature itself, and from Policy, v. 120. Characters given according to the rank of men of the world, v. 135. And some reason for it, v. 140. Education alters the Nature, or at least Character, of many, v. 149. Actions, Passions, Opinions,

Manners, Humours, or Principles, all subject to change. No Judging by Nature, from v. 158 to 178. III. It only remains to find (if we can) his **RULING PASSION**: That will certainly influence all the rest, and can reconcile the seeming or real inconsistency of all his actions, v. 175. Instanced in the extraordinary character of Clodio, v. 179. A caution against mistaking second qualities for first, which will destroy all possibility of the knowledge of mankind, v. 210. Examples of the strength of the Ruling Passion, and its continuation to the last breath, v. 222. &c.



5 N059



Boastfull & rough your first Son is a Squire;  
 The next a Tradesman, meek and much a Liar;  
 Tom struts a Soldier, open, bold and Brave;  
 Will sneaks a Scrivener, an exceeding Knave.  
*Char. of Men.*



YES, you despise the man to Books confin'd  
Who from his study rails at human kind;  
Tho' what he learns he speaks, and may advance

*Epistle of the knowledge and Characters of Men.)* Whoever compares this with the former Editions of this poem, will observe that the order and disposition of the several parts are entirely changed and reversed, tho' with hardly the Alteration of a single Word. When the Editor, at the Author's desire, first examined this Epistle, he was surprized to find it contain a number of fine observations, without order, connection, or dependence: but much more so, when, on an attentive review, he saw, that, if put into a different form, on an idea he then conceived, it would have all the clearness of method, and force of connected reasoning. The author appeared as much struck with the thing as the editor, and agreed to put the Poem into the present order, which has given it all the justness of a true composition. The introduction of the epistle on Riches was in the same condition, and underwent the same reform.

*Moral Essays*.) The ESSAY ON MAN was intended to have been comprised in Four Books:

The *First* of which, the Author has given us under that title, in four Epistles.

The *Second* was to have consisted of the same number: 1. Of the extent and limits of human Reason. 2. Of those Arts and Sciences, and of the parts of them, which are useful, and therefore attainable. together with those which are unuseful, and therefore unattainable. 3. Of the Nature, Ends, Use, and Application of the different Capacities of Men. 4. Of the Use of Learning, of the Science of the World, and of Wit; conclu-

Some gen'ral maxims, or be right by chance.  
 The coxcomb bird, so talkative and grave,       5  
 That from his cage cries Cuckold, Whore; and Knave,

## COMMENTARY.

EPISTLE I.) This Epistle is divided into three principal parts or members: The first (from v. 1 to 99.) treats of the difficulties in coming at the *Knowledge* and true *Characters* of *Men*. — The second (from v. 98 to 173.) of the *wrong means* which both *Philosophers* and *Men of the World* have employed in surmounting those difficulties. And the third (from v. 174 to the end) treats of the *right means*, with directions for the application of them,

## NOTES.

ding with a Satyr against the Misapplication of them, illustrated by Pictures, Characters, and Examples.

The *Third Book* regarded Civil Regimen, or the Science of Politics, in which the several forms of a Republic were to be examined and explained; together with the several Modes of Religious Worship, as far forth as they affect Society; between which the Author always supposed there was the most interesting relation and closest connection; so that this part would have treated of Civil and Religious Society in their full extent.

The *Fourth* and last Book concerned private Ethics or practical Morality, considered in all the Circumstances, Orders, Professions; and Stations of human Life.

The Scheme of all this had been maturely digested, and communicated to L. Bolinbroke, Dr. Swift, and one or two more, and was intended for the only work of his riper Years: but was, partly through ill health, partly through discouragements from the depravity of the times, and partly on prudential and other considerations, interrupted, postponed, and, lastly, in a manner laid aside.

But as this was the Author's favourite Work, which more exactly reflected the Image of his strong capacious mind, and as we can have but a very imperfect idea of it from the *disjecta membra Poetae* that now remain, it may not be amiss to be a little more particular concerning each of these projected books.

Tho' many a passenger he rightly call,  
You hold him no Philosopher at all.

## COMMENTARY

VER. I. *Yes, you despise the man &c.*) The Epistle is introduced (from v. I to 15.) by observing, that the *Knowledge of Men* is neither to be gained by Books nor Experience alone, but by the joint use of both; for that the *Maxims* of the *Philosopher* and the *Conclusions* of the *Man of the World* can, separately, but supply a vague and superficial knowledge: And often not so much; as those *Maxims* are founded in the abstract notions of

## NOTES.

The FIRST, as it treats of Man in the abstract, and considers him in general under every of his relations, becomes the foundation, and furnishes out the subjects, of the three following; so that

The SECOND BOOK was to take up again the *First* and *Second* Epistles of the *First* Book, and treats of man in his intellectual Capacity at large, as has been explained above. Of this, only a small part of the conclusion (which, as we said, was to have contained a Satire against the misapplication of Wit and Learning) may be found in the *Fourth* book of the *Dunciad*, and up and down, occasionally, in the other three.

The THIRD Book, in like manner, was to reassume the subject of the *Third* Epistle of the *First*, which treats of Man in his Social, Political, and Religious Capacity. But this part the Poet afterwards conceived might be best executed in an EPIC POEM; as the Action would make it more animated, and the Fable less invidious; in which all the great Principles of true and false Governments and Religions should be chiefly delivered in feigned Examples.

The FOURTH and last Book was to pursue the subject of the *Fourth* Epistle of the *First*, and treats of *Ethics*, or practical Morality; and would have consisted of many members; of which the four following Epistles were detached Portions: the two first, on the *Characters of Men and Women*, being the introductory part of this concluding Book.

And yet the fate of all extremes is such,  
Men may be read, as well as Books, too much, 10  
To observations which ourselves we make,

## COMMENTARY.

the writer; and these *conclusions* are drawn from the uncertain *conjectures* of the observer: But when the writer joins his *speculation* to the *experience* of the observer, his *notions* are rectified into *principles*: and when the observer regulates his *experience* on the *notions* of the writer, his *conjectures* advance into *science*. Such is the reasoning of this introduction; which, besides its propriety to the general subject of the Epistle, has a peculiar relation to each of its parts or members: For the *causes* of the *difficulty* in coming at the knowledge and characters of men, explained in the first, will shew the importance of what is here delivered, of the *joint* assistance of speculation and practice to surmount it; and the *wrong means*, which both *philosophers* and *men of the world* have employed in overcoming those difficulties discoursed of in the second, have their source here deduced, which is seen to be a *separate* adherence of each to his own method of studying men; and a mutual contempt of the others. Lastly, the *right means* delivered in the third, will be of little use in the application, without the direction here delivered, For tho' the observation of Men and Manners discovered a *ruling passion*, yet, without a *philosophic* knowledge of human nature, we may easily mistake a *secondary* and *subsidiary* passion for the *principal*, and so be never the nearer in the Knowledge of Men. But the elegant and easy *Form* of the *introduction* equals the Propriety of its *matter*; for the epistle being addressed to a noble person, distinguished for his knowledge of the World, it opens,

## NOTES.

VER. 9. *And yet — Men may be read, as well as Books, too much, &c.*) The poet has here covertly describ'd a famous system of a *man of the world*, the celebrated *Maxims* of M. de la Rochefoucault, which are one continued *satire* on human Nature, and hold much of the ill language of the Parrot: Our author's system of human nature will explain the *reason* of the censure.



We grow more partial for th' Observer's sake;  
 To written Wisdom, as another's, less:  
 Maxims are drawn from Notions, those from Guess.  
 There's some Peculiar in each leaf and grain. 15  
 Some unmark'd fibre, or some varying vein:  
 Shall only Man be taken in the gross?  
 Grant but at many sorts of Mind as Moss.  
 That each from other differs, first confess;  
 Next, that he varies from himself no less: 20

COMMENTARY.

as it were, in the midst of a familiar conversation, which lets us at once into his character; where the poet, by politely affecting *only* to ridicule the useless Knowledge of Men confined to Books, and *only* to extol that acquired by the World, artfully insinuates how equally defective the latter may be, when conducted on the same narrow principle: Which is too often the case, as *men of the world* are more than ordinarily prejudiced in favour of their own observations for the sake of the observer, and, for the same reason, less indulgent to the discoveries of others.

I.

VER. 15. *There's some Peculiar &c.*) The poet enters on the First division of his subject, *the difficulties of coming at the Knowledge and true Characters of Men*. The first cause of this difficulty, which he prosecutes (from v. 14 to 19.) is the great *diversity of Characters*, of which, to abate our wonder, and not discourage our inquiry, he only desires we would *grant* him

— but as many sorts of Mind as Moss.

Hereby artfully insinuating, that if Nature has varied the most worthless vegetable into above three hundred species, we need not wonder at the like diversity in the human mind: And if a variety in that vegetable has been thought of importance enough to employ the leisure of a serious enquirer, much more will the same quality in this master-piece of Nature deserve our study and attention.

VER. 19. *That each from other differs, &c.*) A second cause of this difficulty (from v. 18 to 21.) is *Man's inconstancy*, where-



Add Nature's, Custom's, Reason's, Passion's strife,  
And all Opinion's colours cast on life.

Our depths who fathoms, or our shallows finds,  
Quick whirls, and shifting eddies, of our minds?  
On human actions reason tho' you can, 25  
It may be Reason, but it is not Man:

## COMMENTARY.

by not only one man differs from another, but each man from himself.

VER. 21. *Add Nature's &c.*) A third cause (from v. 20 to 23.) is that *obscurity* thrown over the Characters of men, through the strife and contest between *nature* and *custom*, between *reason* and *appetite*, between *truth* and *opinion*. And as most men, either thro' *education*, *temperature*, or *profession*, have their Characters warp'd by *custom*, *appetite*, and *opinion*, the obscurity arising from thence is almost universal.

VER. 23. *Our depths who fathoms, &c.*) A fourth cause (from v. 20 to 25.) is deep *dissimulation*, and restless *caprice*, whereby the shallows of the mind are as difficult to be found, as the depths of it to be fathom'd.

VER. 25. *On human actions &c.*) A fifth cause (from v. 24 to 31.) is the sudden change of his *Principle of action*, either on the point of its being laid open and detected, or when it is reasoned upon, and attempted to be explored.

## NOTES.

VER. 22. *And all Opinion's colours cast on life.*) The poet refers here only to the *effects*; In the *Essay on Man* he gives both the *efficient* and the *final cause*: The First in the third Ep. v. 231.

E'er Wit oblique had broke that steady light.

For *oblique Wit* is *Opinion*. The other; in the second Ep. v. 283.

Mean while Opinion gilds with varying rays

These painted clouds that beautify our days, &c.)

VER. 26. *It may be Reason, but it is not Man:*) i. e. The Philosopher may invent a *rational hypothesis* that shall account for the appearances he would investigate; and yet that *hypothesis* be all the while very wide of *truth* and the *nature of things*.

His Principle of action once explore,  
 That instant 'tis his Principle no more.  
 Like following life thro' creatures you dissect,  
 You lose it in the moment you detect. 30

Yet more; the difference is as great between  
 The optics seeing, as the objects seen.  
 All Manners take a tincture from our own;  
 Or come discolour'd thro' our Passions shown.  
 Or Fancy's beam enlarges, multiplies, 35  
 Contracts, inverts, and gives ten thousand dyes,

## COMMENTARY.

VER. 31. *Yet more; the difference &c.*) Hitherto the poet hath spoken of the causes of difficulty arising from the *obscurity of the Object*; he now comes to those which proceed from *defects in the Observer*. The First of which, and a sixth cause of difficulty, he shews (from 30 to 37.) is the perverse *manners, affections, and imaginations* of the observer, whereby the Characters of others are rarely seen either in their true *light, complexion, or proportion*.

## NOTES.

VER. 29. *Like following life thro' creatures you dissect, — You lose it in the moment you detect.*) This Simile is extremely beautiful. In order to shew the difficulty of discovering the operations of the heart in a *moral sense*, he illustrates it by another attempt still more difficult, the discovery of its operations in a *natural*: For the seat of animal life being in the *heart*, our endeavours of tracing it thither must necessarily drive it from thence.

VER. 33. *All Manners take a tincture from our own; — Or come discolour'd thro' our Passions shown.*) These two lines are remarkable for the exactness and propriety of expression. The word *tincture*, which implies a weak colour given by degrees, well describes the influence of the *Manners*: and the word *discolour*, which implies a quicker change and by a deeper dye, denotes as well the operation of the *Passions*.

Nor will Life's stream for observation stay,  
 It hurries all too fast to mark their way:  
 In vain sedate reflections we wou'd make,  
 When half our knowledge we must snatch, not take.  
 Oft, in the Passions' wild rotation tost, 41  
 Our spring of action to ourselves is lost:  
 Tir'd, not determin'd, to the last we yield,  
 And what comes then is master of the field.  
 As the last image of that troubled heap, 45  
 When sense subsides, and Fancy sports in sleep,  
 (-Tho' past the recollection of the thought)

## COMMENTARY.

VER. 37. *Nor will Life's stream for Observation &c.* The Second of these, and seventh cause of difficulty (from v. 36 to 41.) is the *shortness of human life*, which will not suffer the observer to select and weigh put his knowledge, but just to snatch it as it rolls rapidly by him down the current of Time.

VER. 41. *Oft, in the Passions' &c.* We come now to the eighth and last cause, which very properly concludes the account, as, in a sort, it sums up all the difficulties in one (from v. 40 to 51.) namely, that very often the *man himself is ignorant of his own motive of action*; the cause of which ignorance our author has admirably explain'd: When the mind (says he) is now quite tired out by the long conflict of opposite motives, it withdraws its attention, and suffers the *will* to be seized upon by the first that afterwards obtrudes itself, without taking notice what that motive is. This is *fully* illustrated by what he supposes the general cause of dreams; where the fancy, just let loose, possesses itself of the *last image* which it meets with on the confines between sleep and waking, and on that erects all its visionary operation; yet this image is, with great difficulty, recollected; and never, but when some accident happens to interrupt our first slumbers: Then (which proves the truth of the hypothesis) we are sometimes able to trace the workings of the Fancy backwards, from image to image, in a chain, till we come to that from whence they all arose.

Becomes the stuff of which our dream is wrought:  
 Something as dim to our internal view,  
 Is thus, perhaps, the cause of most we do. 50  
 True, some are open, and to all men known;  
 Others so very close, they're hid from none;  
 (So darkness strikes the sense no less than Light)  
 Thus gracious CHANDOS is belov'd at sight;  
 And ev'ry child hates Shylock, tho' his soul 55  
 Still sits at squat, and peeps not from its hole.  
 At half mankind when gen'rous Manly raves,  
 All know 'tis Virtue, for he thinks them knaves:  
 When universal homage Umbra pays,

COMMENTARY.

VER. 51. *True, some are open, &c.*) But now in answer to all this, an *objector* (from v. 50 to 61.) may say, „That these „difficulties seem to be aggravated; For many Characters are so „plainly marked, that no man can mistake them: And not so „only in the more *open* and *frank*, but in the *closest* and most „*recluse* likewise. „ Of each of which the objector gives an instance, whereby it appears, that the forbidding closeness and concealed hypocrisy in the one, are as conspicuous to all mankind, as the gracious openness and frank plain-dealing of the other. — The Reader sees this objection is more particularly level'd at the doctrine of v. 23.

Our *depths* who fathoms, and our *shallows* finds?  
 for here it endeavours to prove, that both are equally explorable.

NOTES.

VER. 56. — *peeps not from its hole.*) Which shews that this grave person was content with his present situation; as finding but small satisfaction in what a famous poet reckons one of the great advantages of old age,

The soul's dark cottage, batter'd and decay'd,  
 Lets in new light from chinks that time has made. *Scribl.*



All see 'tis Vice, and itch of vulgar praise. 60  
 When Flatt'ry glares, all hate it in a Queen,  
 While one there is who charms us with his Spleen.  
 But these plain Characters we rarely find;  
 Tho' strong the bent, yet quick the turns of mind:  
 Or puzzling Contraries confound the whole; 65  
 Or Affectations quite reverse the soul.  
 The Dull, flat Falshood serves, for policy:

## COMMENTARY.

VER. 63. *But these plain Characters &c.*) To this objection, therefore, our author replies (from v. 60 to 67.) that indeed the fact may be true in the instances given, but that such *plain characters* are extremely rare: And for the truth of this, he not only appeals to experience, but explains the causes of that perplexed and complicated Character which diffuses itself over the whole species. 1. The First of which is, the *vivacity of the imagination*; so that when the bias of the Passions is sufficiently determined to mark out the Character, yet even then, as the vigour of the Fancy generally rises in proportion to the strength of the Appetites, the one no sooner directs the bias, than the other reverses it,

Tho' strong the bent, yet quick the turns of mind.

2. A Second cause is the *contrariety of Appetites*, which drawing several ways, as *Avarice* and *Luxury*, *Ambition* and *Indolence*, &c. (expressed in the line,

Or puzzling *Contraries* confound the whole,) they must needs make the same Character inconsistent to itself, and consequently inexplicable to the observer.

3. A third cause is *Affectation*, that aspires to qualities, which neither *nature* nor *education* has given us, and which, consequently, neither *nature* nor *art* will ever render graceful or becoming. On this account it is, he well observes,

Or Affectations quite reverse the soul;

*natural passions* may indeed turn it from that bias which the *ruling one* has given it; but the *affected passions* distort all its faculties, and cramp all its operations; so that it acts with the same constraint that a tumbler walks upon his hands,



Ep. I. MORAL ESSAYS. 163

And in the Cunning, Truth itself's a lye:  
Unthought-of Frailties cheat us in the Wise;  
The Fool lies hid in inconsistencies 70

See the same man, in vigour, in the gout;  
Alone, in company; in place, or out;  
Early at Bus'ness, and at Hazard late;  
Mad at a Fox-chace, wise at a Debate;  
Drunk at a Borough, civil at a Ball; 75  
Friendly at Hackney, faithless at Whitehall.

Carius is ever moral, ever grave,  
Thinks who endures a knave, is next a knave,  
Saves just at dinner - - - then prefers, no doubt,  
A Rogue with Ven'son to a Saint without. 80

Who would not praise Patritio's high desert,  
His hand unstain'd, his uncorrupted heart,  
His comprehensive head! all Interests weigh'd,  
All Europe sav'd, yet Britain not betray'd.

COMMENTARY.

VER. 69. *Unthought-of Frailties &c.*) 4. A Fourth cause lies in the *Inequalities in the human mind*, which expose the *wise* to unexpected frailties, and conduct the *weak* to as unlook'd for wisdom.

VER. 71. *See the same Man, &c.*) Of all these Four causes he here gives examples; 1. Of the *vivacity of the Imagination* (from v. 71 to 77.) — 2. Of the *contrariety of Appetites* (from v. 76 to 81.) — 3. Of *Affection* (from v. 80 to 84.) — and 4. Of the *Inequalities of the human mind* (from v. 86 to 95.)

NOTES.

VER. 81. *Patritio*) Lord G—n.

He thanks you not, his pride is in Picquette, 85  
New-market-fame, and judgment at a Bett.

What made (say Montagne, or more sage Charron!)  
Orho a warrior, Cromwell a buffoon?  
A perjur'd Prince a leaden Saint revere,  
A godless Regent tremble at a Star? 90

## VARIATIONS.

After v. 86. in the former Editions,

Triumphant leaders, at an army's head,  
Hemm'd round with glories, pilfer; cloth or bread;  
As meanly plunder as they bravely fought;  
Now save a People, and now save a goat.

## NOTES.

VER. 87. — *(say Montagne, or more sage Charron!)* Charron was an admirer of Montagne; had contracted a strict friendship with him; and has transferred an infinite number of his thoughts into his famous book *De la Sagesse*; but his moderating everywhere the extravagant Pyrrhonism of his friend, is the reason why the poet calls him *more sage Charron*.

VER. 89. *(A perjur'd Prince)* Louis XI. of France, wore in his Hat a leaden image of the Virgin Mary, which when he swore by, he feared to break his oath. P.

VER. 90. *(A godless Regent tremble at a Star?)* Philip Duke of Orleans, Regent of France in the minority of Louis XV, superstitious in judicial astrology, tho' an unbeliever in all religion. The same has been observed of many other *Politicians*. The Italians, in general, are not more noted for their refined *Politics* than for their attachment to the dotages of *Astrology* under the influence of *Atheism*. It may be worth while to enquire into the cause of so singular a phenomenon, as it may probably do honour to Religion. These men observing (and none have equal opportunities of so doing) how perpetually public events fall out besides their expectation, and contrary to the best-laid schemes of worldly policy, cannot but confess that human affairs are ordered by some power extrinsical. To acknowledge a God

The throne a Bigot keep; a Genius quit,  
Faithless thro' Piety, and dup'd thro' Wit?  
Europe a Woman, Child, or Dotard rule,  
And just her wisest monarch made a fool?

Know, GOD and NATURE only are the same:  
In Man, the judgment shoots at flying game; 96

COMMENTARY.

VER. 95. *Know, God and Nature &c.*) Having thus proved what he had proposed, the *premises* naturally lead him into a moral reflexion, with which he concludes his *first part*, namely, that constancy is to be expected in no human Character whatsoever, but to be found only in God and his Laws: That as to Man, he is not only perpetually shifting and varying, even while

NOTES.

and his Providence would be next to introducing a morality destructive of that public system which they think necessary for the government of the world. They have recourse therefore to that absurd scheme of Power which rules by no other law than *Fate* or *Destiny*. The consideration of this perhaps was the reason that the poet, to keep up decorum, and to preserve the distinction between a *Patriot* and a *Politician*, makes the former rely on *Providence* for the public safety, in the concluding words of the Epistle,

Such in those moments as in all the past,  
O *save my Country, Heav'n!* shall be your last.

VER. 91. *The throne a Bigot keep, a Genius quit,*) Philip V. of Spain, who, after renouncing the throne for Religion, resumed it to gratify his Queen; and Victor Amadeus II. King of Sardinia, who resigned the crown, and trying to reassume it, was imprisoned till his death.

VER. 93. *Europe a Woman, Child, or Dotard rule, — And just her wisest monarch made a fool?*) The Czarina, the King of France, the Pope, and the abovementioned King of Sardinia.

VER. 95. *Know, God and Nature, &c.*) By *Nature* is not here meant any imaginary substitute of God, called a *Plastic nature*; but his *moral laws*: And this observation was inserted

A bird of passage! gone as soon as found,  
Now in the Moon perhaps, now under ground.

In vain the sage, with retrospective eye,  
Would from th' apparent What conclude the Why,

## COMMENTARY.

*within the verge* of his own nature; but is frequently flying out into each extreme both *above* and *below* it: Now associating in good earnest with Brutes; and now again affecting the imaginary conversation of Angels (See *Essay on Man*, Ep. ii. v. 8.)

A bird of passage! gone as soon as found,  
Now in the *Moon* perhaps, now *under ground*.

## II.

VER. 99. *In vain the Sage, &c.*) The author having shewn the difficulties in coming to the Knowledge and true Characters of men, enters now upon the *second division* of his *Piece*, which is of the *wrong means* that both Philosophers and Men of the world have employed in surmounting those difficulties. He had, in the Introduction, spoken of the absurd conduct of both, in despising the assistance of each other: He now justifies his censure by an examination of their peculiar doctrines; and, to take them in their own way, considers them, as they would be considered, *separately*. And *first*, of the *Philosopher*, whose principal mistake is in supposing that *Actions* best decipher the *Motive* of the actor. This he confutes (from v. 98 to 109.) by shewing that *different Actions* proceed often from the *same motive*: whether of *accident*, as disappointed views; or of *temperature*, as an adult complexion; which he thus illustrates,

Behold! If Fortune or a Mistress frowns, &c.

## NOTES.

with great propriety and discretion, in the conclusion of a long detail of the various characters of men: For, from this circumstance, *Montagne* and others have been bold enough to insinuate, that morality is founded more in custom and fashion than in the nature of things. The speaking therefore of a moral law of God as having all the constancy and durability of his Essence; had an high expediency in this place.

Ep I. MORAL ESSAYS. 167

Infer the Motive from the Deed, and shew, 101  
That what we chanc'd was what we meant to do,  
Behold! If Fortune or a Mistress frowns,  
Some plunge in bus'ness, others shave their crowns:  
To ease the Soul of one oppressive weight, 105  
This quits an Empire, that embroils a State:  
The same adust complexion has impell'd  
Charles to the Convent, Philip to the Field.

Not always Actions shew the man: we find  
Who does a kindness, is not therefore kind; 110

COMMENTARY.

In judging therefore of *Motives* by *Actions*, the Philosopher must needs be frequently mistaken; because the passion or appetite, which, when impelling to *Action*, we call the *Motive*, may be equally gratified in the pursuit of very different measures.

VER. 109. *Not always actions shew the man: &c.* The Philosopher's second mistake is, that *Actions* decipher the Character of the actor. This too, the author confutes (from v. 108 to 135.) and, as in correcting the foregoing mistake, he proved, that different *Actions* often proceed from the same *Motive*: so here he proves, that the same *Action* proceeds from different *Motives*; thus a kind *Action*, he observes, as commonly ariseth from the accidents of prosperity or fine weather, as from a natural disposition to

NOTES.

VER. 107. *The same adust complexion has impell'd — Charles to the Convent, Philip to the Field.* The atrabilaire complexion of Philip II. is well known, but not so well that he derived it from his father Charles V. whose health, the historians of his life tell us, was frequently disorder'd by bilious fevers. But what the author meant principally to observe here was, that this humour made both these princes act contrary to their Character; Charles, who was an active man, when he retired into a Convent; Philip, who was a man of the Closet, when he gave the battle of St. Quintin.



Perhaps Prosperity becalm'd his breast,  
 Perhaps the Wind just shifted from the east:  
 Not therefore humble he who seeks retreat,  
 Pride guides his steps, and bids him shun the great:  
 Who combats bravely is not therefore brave, 115  
 He dreads a death-bed like the meanest slave:  
 Who reasons wisely is not therefore wise.  
 His pride in Reas'ning, not in Acting lies,  
 But grant that Actions best discover man; 119  
 Take the most strong, and sort them as you can.

## COMMENTARY

humanity; a *modest Action*, as well from pride, as humility; a *brave Action*, as easily from habit or fashion, as magnanimity; and a *prudent Action* as often from vanity, as wisdom. Now the *Character* being really determined by the *Motives*, and various, nay contrary *Motives* producing the same *Action*, the *Action* can never decipher the *Character of the actor*. But further (continues the poet) if we attend to what has been said, we shall discover another circumstance in the case, that will not only make it extremely difficult, but absolutely impracticable to decipher the *Character* by the *Action*: and that is, the *discordancy of Action* in the same *Character*; a necessary consequence of the two principles proved above, that *different Actions proceed from the same Motive*, and that *the same Action proceeds from different Motives*.

VER. 119. *But grant that Actions &c.* But (says he) if you will judge of man by his *Actions*, you are not to select such only as you like, or can manage, you must fairly take all you find: Now, when you have got these together, they will prove so very discordant that no consistent *Character* can possibly be made out of them. What is to be done then? Will you *suppress* all those

## NOTES.

VER. 117. *Who reasons wisely &c.* By *reasoning* is not her; meant *speculating*; but deliberating and resolving in public councils; for this instance is given as *one*, of a variety of *actions*.

The few that glare, each character must mark,  
You balance not the many in the dark.

What will you do with such as disagree?

Suppress them, or miscall them Policy?

Must then at once (the character to save) 124

The plain rough Hero turn a crafty Knave?

Alas! in truth the man but chang'd his mind,

Perhaps was sick, in love, or had not din'd.

Ask why from Britain Cæsar would retreat?

Cæsar himself might whisper he was beat. 130

#### VARIATIONS.

VER. 129. in the former Editions,

Ask why from Britain Cæsar made retreat?

Cæsar himself would tell you he was beat.

The mighty Czar what mov'd to wed a Punk?

The mighty Czar would tell you he was drunk.

Alter'd as above, because Cæsar wrote his Commentaries of this war, and does *not* tell you he was beat. As Cæsar too afforded an instance of both cases, it was thought better to make him the single Example.

#### COMMENTARY.

you cannot reconcile to the few capital Actions which you chuse for the foundation of your Character? But this the laws of truth will not permit. Will you then miscall them? and say they were not the natural workings of the man, but the dis-

#### NOTES.

VER. 130. *Cæsar himself might whisper he was beat.* Cæsar wrote his *Commentaries*, in imitation of the Greek Generals, for the entertainment of the world: But had his friend asked him in his ear, the reason of his sudden retreat from Britain, after, so many pretended victories, we have cause to suspect, even from his own public relation of that matter, that he would have *whisper'd he was beat.*

Why risk the world's great empire for a Punk?

Cæsar perhaps might answer he was drunk.

But, sage historians! 'tis your task to prove

One action Conduct; one, heroic Love.

'Tis from high Life high Characters are drawn,  
A Saint in Crape is twice a Saint in Lawn; 136

#### COMMENTARY.

guises of the politician? But what will you get by that, besides reversing the best known Character, and making the owner of it the direct opposite of himself? However, this (says our author) the reasoning and philosophic historian has been always ready to do with the *Actions* of great men: of which he gives two famous instances in the life of Cæsar. The conclusion, from the whole, is, that *Actions do not shew the Man*.

VER. 135. *'Tis from high Life, &c.*) The poet having done with the *Philosopher*, now turns to the *Man of the world*; whose first mistake is in supposing men's true *Characters may be known by their station*. This, tho' a mere mob-opinion, is the opinion in fashion, and cherished by the Mob of all ranks; therefore, tho' beneath the poet's reasoning, he thought it deserving of his ridicule; and the strongest was what he gives (from v. 134 to 141.) a naked exposition of the fact; to which he has subjoined (from v. 140 to 149.) an ironical apology, that, as Virtue is cultivated with infinitely more labour in Courts than in Cottages, it is but just to set an infinitely higher value on it; which, says he with much pleasantry, is most agreeable to all the fashiona-

#### NOTES.

VER. 131. *Why risk the world's great empire for a Punk?*) After the battle of Pharsalia, Cæsar pursued his enemy to Alexandria, where he became infatuated with the charms of Cleopatra, instead of pushing his advantages, and dispersing the relics of the Pharsalian quarrel, (after narrowly escaping the violence of an enraged populace) he brought upon himself an unnecessary war, at a time his arms were most wanted elsewhere.

A Judge is just, a Chanc'lor juster still;  
 A Gownman, learn'd; a Bishop, 'what you will;  
 Wife, if a Minister; but, if a King,  
 More wise, more learn'd, more just, more ev'ry thing.  
 Court-Virtues bear, like Gems, the highest rate, 141  
 Born where Heav'n's influence scarce can penetrate:  
 In life's low vale, the soil the Virtues like,  
 They please as beauties, here a wonders strike.  
 Tho' the same sun with all-diffusive rays 145  
 Blush in the rose, and in the Di'mond blaze,  
 We prize the stronger effort of his pow'r,  
 And justly set the Gem above the Flow'r.

'Tis Education forms the common mind,  
 Just as the Twing is bent, the Tree's inclin'd. 150  
 Boastful and rough, your first son is a 'Squire;

## COMMENTARY.

ble ways of estimation. For why do the connoisseurs prefer the lively colour in a Gem before that in a Flower, but for its extreme rarity and difficulty of production?

VER. 149. *'Tis Education forms &c.* This second mistake of the *Man of the world* is more serious, it is, that *Characters are best judged of by the general Manners*. This the poet confutes in a lively enumeration of examples (from v. 148 to 158) which shew, that how similar or different soever the *Manners* be by *Nature*, yet they are all new model'd by *Education* and *Profession*; where each man invariably receives that exotic form which the mould he falls into, is fitted to imprint. The *natural Character* therefore can never be judged of by these *fictitious Manners*.

## NOTES.

VER. 141. *Court-virtues bear, like Gems, &c.* This whole reflexion, and the similitude brought to support it, have a great delicacy of ridicule.



The next a Tradesman, meek, and much a liar;  
 Tom struts a Soldier, open, bold, and brave;  
 Will sneaks a Scriv'ner, an exceeding knave: 154  
 Is he a Churchman? then he's fond of pow'r;  
 A Quaker? fly: A Presbyterian? sow'r'  
 A smart Free-thinker? all things in an hour.

Ask men's Opinions: Scoto now shall tell  
 How Trade increases, and the world goes well;  
 Strike off his Pension, by the setting sun, 160  
 And Britain, if not Europe, is undone.

That gay Free-thinker, a fine talker once,  
 What turns him now a stupid silent dunce?  
 Some God, or Spirit he has lately found;  
 Or chanc'd to meet a minister that frown'd. 165

## COMMENTARY.

VER. 158. *Ask mens Opinions: &c.* The third mistake is in judging of mens characters their *Opinions* and *turn of thinking*. But these, the poet shews by two examples (from v. 157 to 166.) are generally sway'd by *Interest*, both in the *affairs of Life* and *Speculation*.

## NOTES.

VER. 152. *The next a Tradesman, meek, and much a liar;* „The only glory of a *Tradesman* (says Hobbes) is to grow excessively rich by the *wisdom* of buying and selling., A pursuit very wide of all *vain-glory*; so that if he be given to *lying*, it is certainly on a more substantial motive, and will therefore rather deserve the name, which this philosopher gives it, of *wisdom*.  
 SCRIBL.

VER. 164, 165. *Some God, or Spirit he has lately found; Or chanc'd to meet a Minister that frown'd.* Disasters the most unlooked for, as they were what the Free-thinker's *Speculations* and *Practice* were principally directed to avoid. — The poet here alludes to the ancient classical opinion, that the sudden vision of a



Judge we by nature? Habit can efface,  
 Int'rest o'ercome, or Policy take place:  
 By Actions? those Uncertainty divides:  
 By Passions? these Dissimulation hides:  
 Opinions? they still take a wider range. 179  
 Find, if you can, in what you cannot change.

Manners with Fortunes, Humours turn with Climes,  
 Tenets with Books, and Principles with Times.

COMMENTARY.

VER. 166. *Judge we by Nature? &c.*) The poet having gone through the mistakes both of the *Philosopher* and *Man of the world*, separately, turns now to both, and (from v. 165 to 174.) jointly addresses them in a recapitulation of his reasoning against each: He shews, that if we pretend to develop the *Character* by the *natural disposition in general*, we shall find it extremely difficult, because this is often effaced by *Habit*, overswayed by *Interest*, and suspended by *Policy*. — If by *Actions*, their contrariety will leave us in utter doubt and uncertainty. — If by *Passions*, we shall be perpetually misled by the mask of *Dissimulation*. — If by *Opinions*, all these concur together to perplex the enquiry. Shew us, then, says he, in the whole range of your *Philosophy* and *Experience*, the thing we can be certain of: For (to sum up all in a word)

*Manners* with Fortunes, *Humours* turn with Climes,  
*Tenets* with Books, and *Principles* with Times.

We must seek therefore some other road to the point we aim at.

NOTES.

God was supposed to strike the irreverend observer speechless. He has only a little extended the conceit, and supposed, that the terrors of a *Court-God* might have the like effect on a very devoted worshipper. SCRIBL.

VER. 172, 173. *Manners with Fortunes, Humours turn with Climes, Tenets with Books, and Principles with Times.*) The poet had hitherto reckoned up the several *simple* causes that hinder our

Search then the RULING PASSION: There, alone,  
 The Wild are constant, and the Cunning known; 175  
 The Fool consistent, and the False sincere;  
 Priest, Princes, Women, no dissemblers here.  
 This clue once found, unravels all the rest,  
 The prospect clears, and Wharton stands confest.  
 Wharton, the scorn and wonder of our days, 180  
 Whose ruling Passion was the Lust of Praise:

## COMMENTARY.

VER. 174. *Search then the Ruling Passion: &c.* And now we enter on the third and last part; which treats of the *right means* of surmounting the difficulties in coming to the *Knowledge and Characters of Men*: This the poet shews, is by *investigating the RULING PASSION*: of whose origin and nature we may find an exact account in the second Ep. of the *Essay on Man*. This *Principle* he rightly observes (from v. 173 to 180.) is the clue that must guide us thro' all the intricacies in the ways of men: To convince us of which, he applies it (from v. 179 to 210.) to the most wild and inconsistent Character that ever was; which (when drawn out at length, in a spirit of poetry as rare as the character itself) we see, this *Principle* unravels, and renders throughout of one plain consistent thread.

## NOTES.

knowledge of the natural characters of men. In these two fine lines he describes the complicated causes. *Humours* bear some relation to *Manners*, that *Principles* do to *Tenets*; that is, the former are *modes* of the latter; our *Manners* (says the Poet) are warped from nature by our *Fortunes* or *Stations*; our *Tenets*, by our *Books* or *Professions*; and then each drawn still more oblique, into *humour* and political *principles*, by the temperature of the *climate*, and the constitution of the *government*.

VER. 174. *Search then the Ruling Passion:*) See *Essay on Man*, Ep. ii. v. 133. & seq.

VER. 181. *The Lust of Praise:*) This very well expresses the *grossness* of his appetite for it; where the *strength* of the Passion had destroyed all the *delicacy* of the Sensation.

Born with whate'er could win it from the Wife,  
 Women and Fools must like him or he dies;  
 Tho' wond'ring Senates hung on all he spoke,  
 The Club must hail him master of the joke, 185  
 Shall parts so various aim at nothing new?  
 He'll shine a Tully and a Wilmot too,  
 Then turns repentant, and his God adores  
 With the same spirit that he drinks and whores;  
 Enough if all around him but admire, 190  
 And now the Punk applaud, and now the Fryer.  
 Thus with each gift of nature and of art,  
 And wanting nothing but an honest heart;  
 Grown all to all, from no one vice exempt;  
 And most contemptible, to shun contempt; 195  
 His passion still, to cover gen'ral praise,  
 His Life, to forfeit it a thousand ways;  
 A constant Bounty which no friend has made;  
 An angel Tongue, which no man can persuade;  
 A Fool, with more of Wit than half mankind, 200

NOTES.

VER. 187. John Wilmot, E. of Rochester, famous for his Wit and Extravagancies in the time of Charles the second. P.

VER. 189. *With the same spirit*) *Spirit*, for principle, not passion.

VER. 200. *A Fool, with more of Wit*) *Folly*, join'd with much *Wit*, produces that behaviour which we call *Absurdity*; and this *Absurdity* the poet has here admirably described in the words.

Too rash for Thought, for Action too refin'd.

by which we are made to understand, that the person described gave a loose to his *Fancy* when he should have used his *Judgment*; and pursued his *Speculations* when he should have trusted to his *Experience*.

Too rash for Thought, for Action too refin'd:  
 A Tyrant to the wife his heart approves;  
 A Rebel to the very king he loves;  
 He dies, sad out-cast of each church and state,  
 And, harder still! flagitious, yet not great. 205  
 Ask you why Wharton broke thro' ev'ry rule?  
 'Twas all for fear the Knaves should call him Fool.

Nature well known, no prodigies remain,  
 Comets are regular, and Wharton plain.

## VARIATIONS.

In the former Editions, v. 208.

Nature well known, no *Miracles* remain.  
 Alter'd, as above, for very obvious reasons.

## NOTES.

VER. 205. *And, harder still! flagitious, yet not great.*) To arrive at what the world calls *Greatness*, a man must either hide and conceal his vices, or he must openly and steddily practise them, in the pursuit and attainment of one important end. This unhappy nobleman did neither.

VER. 207. *'Twas all for fear &c.*) To understand this, we must observe, that the *Lust of general praise* made the person, whose Character is here so admirably drawn, both *extravagant* and *flagitious*, his *Madness* was to please the Fools;

*Women* and *Fools* must like him, or he dies.

And his *Crimes* to avoid the censure of the Knaves,

'Twas all for fear the *Knaves* should call him Fool.

*Prudence* and *Honesty* being the two qualities that Fools and Knaves are most interested, and consequently most industrious, to misrepresent.

VER. 209. *Comets are regular, and Wharton plain.*) This illustration has an exquisite beauty, arising from the exactness of the analogy: For as the appearance of irregularity, in a comets motion, is occasioned by the greatness of the force which pushes it round a very eccentric orb; so it is the violence of the Ruling Passion, that, impatient for its object, in the impetuosity of its course towards it, is frequently hurried to an immense distance from it, which occasions all that puzzling inconsistency of conduct we observe in it.



Yet, in this search, the wisest may mistake, 210  
 If second qualities for first they take,  
 When Catiline by rapine swell'd his store;  
 When Cæsar made a noble dame a whore;  
 In this the Lust, in that the Avarice 214  
 Were means, not ends; Ambition was the vice.

## COMMENTARY.

VER, 210. *Yet, in this search, &c.*) But here (from v. 209 to 222.) he gives one very necessary caution, that, in developing the *Ruling Passion*, we must be careful not to mistake a *subsidiary* passion for the *principal*; which, without great attention, we may be very liable to do; as the *subsidiary*, acting in support of the *principal*, has frequently all its *vigour* and much of its *perseverance*: This error has misled several both of the ancient and modern historians, as when they supposed *Lust* and *Luxury* to be Characteristics of *Cæsar* and *Lucullus*; whereas, in truth, the *Ruling Passion* of both was *Ambition*; which is so certain, that, at whatsoever different time of the Republic these men had lived, their *Ambition*, as the *Ruling Passion*, had been the same; but a different time had changed their *subsidiary* ones of *Lust* and *Luxury*, into their very opposites of *Chastity* and *Fragility*. 'Tis in vain therefore, says our author, for the observer of human nature to fix his attention on the *Workman*, if he all the while mistakes the *Scaffold* for the *Building*.

## NOTES.

VER. 213. — *A noble Dame a whore*;) The sister of Cato, and mother of Brutus.

VER. 215. *Ambition was the vice*.) *Pride*, *Vanity*, and *Ambition* are such bordering and neighbouring vices, and hold so much in common, that we generally find them going together, and therefore, as generally mistake them for one another. This does not a little contribute to our confounding Characters; for they are, in reality, very different and distinct; so much so, that 'tis remarkable, the three greatest men in Rome, and contemporaries, possessed each of these separately, without the least



That very Cæsar born in Scipio's days,  
 Had aim'd, like him, by Chastity at praise.  
 Lucullus, when Frugality could charm,  
 Had roasted turnips in the Sabin farm.  
 In vain th'observer eyes the builder's toil, 220  
 But quite mistakes the scaffold for the pile.  
 In this one Passion man can strength enjoy,  
 As Fits give vigour, just when they destroy.

## COMMENTARY.

VER. 222. *In this one Passion, &c.*) But now it may be objected to our philosophic poet, that he has indeed shewn the true means of coming to the Knowledge and Characters of men by a Principle certain and infallible, when found, yet, by his own account, of so difficult investigation, that its Counterfeit, and it is always attended with one, may be easily mistaken for it. To remove this difficulty, therefore, and consequently the objection that arises from it, the poet has given (from v. 221 to 228.) one certain and infallible criterion of the Ruling Passion, which is this, that all the other passions, in the course of time, change and wear away; while this is ever constant and vigorous; and still going on from strength to strength, to the very moment of its demolishing the miserable machine that it has now at length over-worked. Of this great truth, the poet (from v. 227 to the end) gives various instances in all the principal Ruling Passions of our nature, as they are to be found in the Man of Business, the Man of Pleasure, the Epicure, the Parsimonious, the Toast, Courtier, the Miser, and the Patriot; which last instance the poet has had the art, under the appearance of Satire, to turn into the noblest Compliment on the person to whom the Epistle is addressed.

## NOTES.

mixture of the other two: The men I mean were Cæsar, Cato, and Cicero: For Cæsar had Ambition without either vanity or pride; Cato had Pride without ambition or vanity; and Cicero had Vanity without pride or ambition.

VER. 223. *As Fits give vigour, just when they destroy.*) The similitude is extremely apposite; as most of the instances he has

Time, that on all things lays his lenient hand,  
Yet tames not this; it sticks to our last sand. 225  
Consistent in our follies and our sins.  
Here honest Nature ends as she begins.

Old Politicians chew on wisdom past,  
And totter on in bus'ness to the last;  
As weak, as earnest; and as gravely out, 230  
As sober Lanefb'row dancing in the gout.

Behold a rev'rend sire, whom want of grace  
Has made the father of a nameless race,  
Shov'd from the wall perhaps, or rudely press'd  
By his own son, that passes by unblest'd: 235  
Still to his wench he crawls on knocking knees,  
And envies ev'ry sparrow that he sees,

A salmon's belly, Helluo, was thy fate:  
The doctor call'd, declares all help too late:  
"Mercy! cries Helluo, mercy on my soul! 240  
"Is there no hope? --- Alas! --- then bring the jowl."

The frugal Crone, whom praying priests attend,  
Still tries to save the hallow'd taper's end,

#### NOTES.

afterwards given of the vigorous exertion of the *Ruling Passion* in the last moments, are from such who had hastened their death by an immoderate indulgence of *that Passion*.

\* VER. 225. *Here honest Nature ends as she begins.*) Human nature is here humourously called *honest*, as the impulse of the *ruling passion* (which she gives and cherishes) makes her more and more impatient of disguise.

VER. 231. *Lanefb'row.*) An ancient Nobleman, who continued this practice long after his legs were disabled by the gout. Upon the death of Prince George of Denmark, he demanded an audience of the Queen, to advise her to preserve her health and dispel her grief by *Dancing*. P.

Collects her breath, as ebbing life retires,  
For one puff more, and in that puff expires. 245

"Odious! in woollen! 'twould a Saint provoke,  
(Were the last words that poor Narcissa spoke)  
"No, let a charming Chintz, and Brussels lace  
"Wrap my cold limbs, and shade my lifeless face:  
"One would not, sure, be frightful when one's dead --  
"And --- Betty --- give this Cheek a little Red."

The Courtier smooth, who forty years had shin'd  
An humble servant to all human kind,  
Just brought out this, when scarce his tongue could stir,  
"If --- where I'm going --- I could serve you, Sir?"

"I give and I devise (old Euclio said, 256  
And sigh'd) "my lands and tenements to Ned.  
Your money, Sir? --- "My money, Sir, what all?  
"Why, --- if I must --- (then wept) I give it Paul,  
"The Manor, Sir? --- "The Manor! hold, he cry'd,  
"Not that, --- I cannot part with that" --- and dy'd.

And you! brave COBHAM, to the latest breath  
Shall feel your ruling passion strong in death;  
Such in those moments as in all the past,  
"Oh, save my Country, Heav'n!" shall be your last.

## NOTES.

VER. 247. — *the last words that poor Narcissa spoke* This story, as well as the others, is founded on fact, tho' the author had the goodness not to mention the names. Several attribute this in particular to a very celebrated Actress, who, in dereliction of the thought of being buried in woollen, gave these her last orders with her dying breath. \* P.

VER. 242, *The frugal Crown,*) A fact told him, of a Lady at Paris.



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*In Men we various ruling Passions find,  
 In Women, two almost divide the Kind:  
 Those only fix'd, they first or last obey  
 The Love of Pleasure and the Love of Sway.  
 Char of Women.*






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# MORAL ESSAYS.

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## EPISTLE II. .

TO

A LADY.

*Of the Characters of Women.*

NOTHING so true as what you once let fall,  
 "Most Women have no Characters at all,"  
 Matter too soft a lasting mark to bear,  
 And best distinguish'd by black, brown, or fair.

### NOTES.

*Of the Characters of Women.* There is nothing in Mr. Pope's works more highly finished than this Epistle. Yet its success was in no proportion to the pains he took in composing it. Something he chanced to drop in a short Advertisement prefixed to it, on its first publication, may perhaps account for the small attention given to it. He said, that *no one character in it was drawn from the life*. The Public believed him on his word, and expressed little curiosity about a Satire in which there was nothing personal.

VER. 1. *Nothing so true &c.*) The reader perhaps may be disappointed to find that this *Epistle*, which proposes the same subject with the preceding, is conducted on very different rules of method; for instead of being disposed in the same logical

How many pictures of one Nymph we view, 5  
 All how unlike each other, all how true!  
 Arcadia's Countess, here, in ermin'd pride,

## NOTES.

connexion, and filled with the like philosophical remarks, it is wholly taken up in drawing a great variety of capital Characters: But if he would reflect, that the *two Sexes* make but *one Species*, and consequently, that the Characters of both must be studied and explained on the same principles, he would see, that when the poet had done this in the preceding Epistle, his business here was, not to repeat what he had already delivered, but only to verify and illustrate his doctrine, by every *view* of that perplexity of Nature, which *his* philosophy only can explain. If the reader therefore will but be at the pains to study these Characters with any degree of attention, as they are here masterly drawn, one important particular (for which the poet has artfully prepared him by the introduction) will very forcibly strike his observation; and that is, that all the great strokes in the several Characters of *Women* are not only infinitely perplexed and discordant, like those in *Men*, but absolutely inconsistent, and in a much higher degree *contradictory*. As strange as this may appear yet he will see that the poet has all the while strictly followed Nature, whose ways, we find by the former Epistle, are not a little mysterious; and a mystery this might have remained, had not our author explained it at v. 207. where he shuts up his Characters with this philosophical reflexion:

In Men, we *various* ruling Passions find;

In Women, *two* almost divide the kind;

Those, only fix'd, they first or last obey,

The love of Pleasure, and the love of Sway.

If this account be true, we see the perpetual necessity (which is not the case in *Men*) that *Women* lye under of *disguising* their ruling passion. Now the variety of arts employed to this purpose must needs draw them into infinite contradictions in those *Actions* from whence their general and obvious Character is denominated: To verify this observation, led the reader examine all the Characters here drawn, and try whether with this key he cannot

Is there, Pastora by a fountain side.  
 Here Fannia, leering on her own good man,  
 And there, a naked Leda with a Swan. IO

## NOTES.

discover that all their Contradictions arise from a desire to hide the *ruling Passion*.

But this is not the worst. The poet afterwards (from v. 218 to 249.) takes notice of another mischief arising from this necessity of hiding their ruling Passions; which is, that generally the end of each is defeated even there where they are most violently pursued: For the necessity of hiding them inducing an habitual dissipation of mind, Reason, whose office it is to regulate the *ruling Passion*, loses all its force and direction; and these unhappy victims to their principles, tho' with their attention still fixed upon them, are ever prosecuting the means destructive of their end, and thus become ridiculous in youth, and miserable in old age.

Let me not omit to observe the great beauty of the conclusion: It is an Encomium on an imaginary Lady to whom the Epistle is addressed, and artfully turns upon the fact which makes the subject of the Epistle, the *contradiction of a Woman's Character*, in which contradiction he shews that all the lustre even of the best Character consists:

And yet, believe me, good as well as ill,  
 Woman's at best a *Contradiction* still, &c.

VER. 5. *How many pictures*) The poet's purpose here is to shew, that the Characters of Women are generally inconsistent with themselves; and this he illustrates by so happy a *Similitude*, that we see the folly, described in it, arises from that very principle which gives birth to this inconsistency of Character.

VER. 7, 8, 10, &c. *Arcadia's Countess*, — *Pastora by a fountain* — *Leda with a swan*. — *Magdalen* — *Cecilia* — ) Attitudes in which several ladies affected to be drawn, and sometimes one lady in them all — The poet's politeness and complaisance to the sex is observable in this instance, amongst others, that, whereas in the *Characters of Men*, he has sometimes made use of real names, in the *Characters of Women* always fictitious, P.

Let then the fair one beautifully cry,  
 In Magdalen's loose hair and lifted eye,  
 Or drest in smiles of sweet Cecilia shine,  
 With simp'ring Angels, Palms, and Harps divine;  
 Whether the Charmer sinner it, or saint it, 15  
 If Folly grow romantic, I must paint it.

Come then, the colours and the ground prepare!  
 Dip in the Rainbow, trick her off in Air;  
 Chuse a firm Cloud, before it fall, and in it  
 Catch; ere she change, the Cynthia of this minute. 20

Rufa, whole eye quick-glancing o'er the Park,  
 Attracts each light gay meteor of a Spark,  
 Agrees as ill with Rufa studyng Locke,  
 As Sappho's di'monds with her dirty smock;  
 Or Sappho at her toilet's greazy task, 25  
 With Sappho fragrant at an ev'ning Mask:  
 So morning Infects that in muck begun,  
 Shine, buzz, and fly-blow in the setting-sun.

## NOTES.

VER. 20. *Catch, ere she change, the Cynthia of this minute.*  
 Alluding to the precept of *Fresnoy*,

*formæ veneres captando fugaces.*

VER. 21. Instances of contrarieties, given even from such  
 Characters as are most strongly mark'd, and seemingly therefore  
 most consistent: As, I. In the *Affected*, v. 21, &c. P.

VER. 23. *Agrees as ill with Rufa studyng Locke.* This thought  
 is expressed with great humour in the following stanza;

Tho' Artemisia talks, by fits,  
 Of councils, classics, Fathers, wits;  
 Reads Malbranche, Boyle, and Locke;  
 Yet in some things, methinks, she fails,  
 'Twere well, if she wou'd pare her nails,  
 And wear a cleaner smock.

How soft is Silia! fearful to offend;  
 The frail one's advocate, the Weak one's friend. 30  
 To her, Calista prov'd her conduct nice;  
 And good Simplicius asks of her advice.  
 Sudden, she storms! she raves! You tip the wink,  
 But spare your censure; Silia does not drink.  
 All eyes may see from what the change arose, 35  
 All eyes may see---a Pimple on her nose.  
 Papillia, wedded to her am'rous spark,  
 Sighs for the shades--"How charming is a Park!"  
 A Park is purchas'd, but the Fair he sees  
 All bath'd in tears--"Oh odious, odious Trees!"  
 Ladies, like variegated Tulips, shew; 41  
 'Tis to their Changes half their charms we owe;  
 Fine by defect, and delicately weak,  
 Their happy Spots the nice admirer take.  
 'Twas thus Calypso once each heart alarm'd, 45  
 Aw'd without Virtue, without Beauty charm'd;  
 Her Tongue bewitch'd as odly as her Eyes,  
 Less Wit than Mimic, more a Wit than wife;  
 Strange graces still, and stranger flights she had,  
 Was just not ugly, and was just not mad: 50  
 Yet ne'er so sure our passion to create,  
 As when she touch'd the brink of all we hate.

## NOTES.

VER. 29 and 37. II. Contrarieties in the *Soft-natured*. P.

VER. 45. III. Contrarieties in the *Cunning and Artful*. P.

VER. 52. *As when she touch'd the brink of all we hate.* Her charms consisted in the singular turn of her vivacity; consequently the stronger she exerted this vivacity the more forcible must be her attraction. But the point, where it came to excess, would destroy all the delicacy, and expose all the coarseness of sensuality.



Narcissa's nature, tolerably mild,  
 To make a wash, would hardly stew a child;  
 Has ev'n been prov'd to grant a Lover's pray'r, 55  
 And paid a Tradesman once to make him stare;  
 Gave alms at Easter, in a Christian trim,  
 And made a Widow happy, for a whim.  
 Why then declare Good-nature is her scorn,  
 When 'tis by that alone she can be born? 60  
 Why pique all mortals, yet affect a name?  
 A fool to Pleasure, yet a slave to Fame;  
 Now deep in Taylor and the Book of Martyrs,  
 Now drinking Citron with his Grace and Charms:  
 Now Conscience chills her, and now Passion burns; 65  
 And Atheism and Religion take their turns;  
 A very Heathen in the carnal part,  
 Yet still a sad, good Christian at her heart.

See Sin in State, majestically drunk;  
 Proud as a Peerefs, prouder as a Punk; 70  
 Chaste to her Husband, frank to all beside,  
 A teeming Mistress, but a barren Bride.  
 What then? let Blood and Body bear the fault,  
 Her Head, untouch'd, that noble Seat of Thought:  
 Such this day's doctrine---in another fit 75  
 She sins with Poets thro' pure Love of Wit.

## NOTES.

VER. 53. IV. In the *Whimsical*. P.

VER. 57. — in a *Christian trim*.) This is finely expressed, implying that her very charity was as much an exterior of Religion, as the ceremonies of the season. It was not even in a *Christian humour*, it was only in a *Christian trim*.

VER. 69. V. In the *Lewd and Vicious*. P.

What has not fir'd her bosom or her brain?  
 Cæsar and Tall-boy, Charles and Charlema'ne.  
 As Helluo, late Dictator of the Feast,  
 The Nose of Hautgout and the Tip of Taste, 80  
 Critiqu'd your wine, and analyz'd your meat,  
 Yet on plain Pudding deign'd at-home to eat:  
 So Philomedé, lect'ring all mankind  
 On the soft Passion, and the Taste refin'd,  
 'Th' Address, the Delicacy---stoops at once, 85  
 And makes her hearty meal upon a Dunce,

Flavia's a Wit, has too much sense to Pray;  
 To toast our wants and wishes, is her way;  
 Nor asks of God, but of her Stars, to give  
 The mighty blessing, "while we live, to live." 90  
 Then all for Death, that Opiate of the soul!  
 Lucretia's dagger, Rosamonda's bowl.  
 Say, what can cause such impotence of mind?  
 A Spark too fickle, or a Spouse too kind.  
 Wise Wretch! with pleasures too refin'd to please; 95  
 With too much Spirit to be e'er at ease;  
 With too much Quickness ever to be taught;  
 With too much Thinking to have common Thought:

## VARIATIONS.

VER. 77. *What has not fir'd &c.* in the MS.  
 In whose mad brain the mixt ideas roll  
 Of Tall-boy's breeches, and of Cæsar's soul.

## NOTES.

VER. 87. Contrarieties in the *Witty* and *Refin'd*. P.  
 VER. 89. *Nor asks of God, but of her Stars.* — *Death, that*  
*Opiate of the soul!* See Note on v. 90. of Ep. to Lord Cobham.

You purchase Pain with all that Joy can give,  
And die of nothing but a Rage to live, 100

Turn then from Wits; and look on Simo's Mate,  
No Als so meek, no Als so obstinate.

Or her, that owns her Faults, but never mends,  
Because she's honest, and the best of Friends.

Or her; whose life the Church and Scandal share,  
For ever in a Passion, or a Pray'r. 106

Or her, who laughs at Hell, but (like her Grace)  
Cries, "Ah! how charming, if there's no such place!"

Or who in sweet vicissitude appears  
Of Mirth and Opium, Ratafie and Tears, 110

The daily Anodyne, and nightly Draught,  
To kill those foes to Fair ones, Time and Thought.

Woman and Fool are two hard things to hit;  
For true No-meaning puzzles more than Wit.

But what are these to great Atossa's mind? 115  
Scarce once herself, by turns all Womankind!

Who, with herself, or others, from her birth  
Finds all her life one warfare upon earth:

Shines, in exposing Knaves, and painting Fools,  
Yet is, whate'er she hates and ridicules. 120

No Thought advances, but her Eddy Brain  
Whisks it about, and down it goes again.

#### VARIATIONS.

After v. 122. in the MS.

Oppress'd with wealth and wit, abundance sad!

One makes her poor; the other makes her mad.

#### NOTES.

VER. 107. *Or her, who laughs at Hell, but (like her Grace)*  
— *Cries, "Ah! how charming, if there's no such place!," i. e. Her*  
*who affects to laugh out of fashion, and strives to disbelieve out*  
*of fear.*

Full sixty years the World has been her Trade,  
 The wisest Fool much Time has ever made.  
 From loveless youth to unrespected age, 125  
 No Passion gratify'd except her Rage.  
 So much the Fury still out-ran the Wit,  
 The Pleasure with her, provokes Revenge from Hell,  
 But he's a bolder man who dares be well, 130  
 Her ev'ry turn with Violence pursu'd,  
 Nor more a storm her Hate than gratitude:  
 To that each Passion turns, or soon or late;  
 Love, if it makes her yield, must make her hate:  
 Superiors? death! and Equals? what a curse: 135  
 But an Inferior not dependant? worse.  
 Offend her, and she knows not to forgive;  
 Oblige her, and she'll hate you while you live:  
 But die, and she'll adore you--Then the Bust  
 And Temple rise---then fall again to dust. 140  
 Last night, her Lord was all that's good and great;  
 A Knave this morning, and his Will a Cheat.  
 Strange! by the Means defeated of the Ends,  
 By Spirit robb'd of Pow'r, by Warmth of Friends,  
 By Wealth of Follow'rs! without one distress 145  
 Sick of herself thro' very selfishness!  
 Atossa, curs'd with ev'ry granted pray'r,  
 Childless with all her Children, wants an Heir,

## VARIATIONS.

After v. 148. in the MS.

This Death decides, nor lets the blessing fall  
 On any one she hates, but on them all.  
 Curs'd chance! this only could afflict her more,  
 If any part should wander to the poor.

To Heirs unknown descends th'unguarded store,  
Or wanders, Heav'n-directed, to the Poor. 150

Pictures like these, dear Madam, to design,  
Asks no firm hand, and no unerring line;  
Some wand'ring touches, some reflected light,  
Some flying stroke alone can hit 'em right:  
For how should equal Colours do the knack? 155  
Chameleons who can paint in white and black?

## NOTES.

VER. 150. *Or wanders, Heav'n-directed, &c.*) Alluding and referring to the great principle of his Philosophy, which he never loses sight of, and which teaches, that Providence is incessantly turning the evils arising from the follies and vices of men to general good.

VER. 156. *Chameleons who can paint in white and black?*) There is one thing that does a very distinguished honour to the accuracy of our poet's judgment, of which, in the course of these observations, I have given many instances, and shall here explain in what it consists; it is this, that the *Similitudes* in his didactic poems, of which he is not sparing, and which are all highly poetical, are always chosen with such exquisite discernment of Nature, as not only to illustrate the particular point he is upon, but to establish the general principles he would enforce; so, in the instance before us, he compares the inconstancy and contradiction in the Characters of Women, to the change of colours in the Chameleon; yet 'tis nevertheless the great principle of this poem to shew that the general Characteristic of the Sex, as to the Ruling Passions, which they all have, is more uniform than that in Man: Now for this purpose, all Nature could not have supplied such another illustration as this of the Chameleon; for tho' it instantaneously assumes much of the colour of every subject on which it chances to be placed, yet, as the most accurate *Virtuosi* have observed, it has *two* native colours of its own, which (like the *two* ruling passions in the Sex) amidst all these changes are never totally discharged, but, tho' often discoloured by the neighbourhood of adventitious ones, still make the foundation, and give a tincture to all those which, from thence, it occasionally assumes.



"Yet Cloe sure was form'd without a spot"---  
 Nature in her then err'd not, but forgot.  
 "With ev'ry pleasing, ev'ry prudent part,  
 "Say, what can Cloe want?"---She wants a Heart. 160  
 She speaks, behaves, and acts just as she ought;  
 But never, never, reach'd one gen'rous Thought.  
 Virtue she finds too painful an endeavour,  
 Content to dwell in Decencies for ever.  
 So very reasonable, so unmov'd. 165  
 As never yet to love, or to be lov'd.  
 She, while her Lover pants upon her breast,  
 Can mark the figures on an Indian chest;  
 And when she sees her Friend in deep despair,  
 Observes how much a Chintz exceeds Mohair. 170  
 Forbid it Heav'n, a Favour or a Debt  
 She e'er should cancel---but she may forget.  
 Safe is your Secret still in Cloe's ear;  
 But none of Cloe's shall you ever hear.  
 Of all her Dearts she never slander'd one, 175  
 But cares not if a thousand are undone.  
 Would Cloe know if you're alive or dead?  
 She bids her Footman put it in her head,

## NOTES.

VER. 157. „Yet Cloe sure &c.) The purpose of the poet in this Character is important: It is to shew that the politic or prudent government of the passions is not enough to make a Character amiable; nor even to secure it from being ridiculous, if the end of that government be not pursued, which is the free exercise of the social appetites after the selfish ones have been subdued; for that if, tho' reason govern, the heart be never consulted, we interest ourselves as little in the fortune of such a Character, as in any of the foregoing, which passions or caprice drive up and down at random.

Cloe is prudent---Would you too be wise?  
Then never break your heart when Cloe dies. 180

One certain Portrait may (I grant) be seen,  
Which Heav'n has varnish'd out, and made a *Queen*:  
THE SAME FOR EVER! and describ'd by all  
With Truth and Goodness, as with Crown and Ball.  
Poets heap Virtues, Painters Gems at will, 185  
And show their zeal, and hide their want of skill.  
'Tis well---but, Artists; who can paint or write,  
To draw the Naked is your true delight.  
'That Robe of Quality so struts and swells,  
None see what Parts of Nature it conceals: 190  
Th'exactest traits of Body or of Mind,  
We owe to models of an humble Kind.  
If QUEENSBERRY to strip there's no compelling,  
'Tis from a Handmaid we must take a Helen.  
From Peer or Bishop 'tis no easy thing 195  
To draw the man who loves his God, or King:  
Alas! I copy, (or my draught would fail)  
From honest Mah'met, or plain Parson Hale.

#### VARIATIONS.

After v. 198. in the MS.

Fain I'd in, Fulvia! spy the tender Wife;  
I cannot prove it on her, for my life:  
And, for a noble pride, I blush no less,  
Instead of Berenice to think on Bess.  
Thus while immortal Cibber only sings  
(As \* and H\*\*y preach) for queens and kings,  
The nymph, that ne'er read Milton's mighty line,  
May, if the love, and merit verse, have mine.

But grant, in Public Men sometimes are shown,  
 A Woman's seen in Private life alone:      200  
 Our bolder Talents in full light display'd;  
 Your Virtues open fairest in the shade.

## VARIATIONS.

VER. 207. in the first Edition.

In sev'ral Men we sev'ral passions find;

In Women, two almost divide the Kind.

## NOTES.

VER. 181. *One certain Portrait — the same for ever! —*

This is intirely ironical, and conveys under it this general moral truth, that there is, in life, no such thing as a perfect Character; so that the satire falls not on any particular Character, or Station, but on the Character-maker only. See Note on v. 78. I Dialogue 1738. —

VER. 198. *Mah'met*, servant to the late King, said to be the son of a Turkish Bassa, whom he took at the Siege of Buda, and constantly kept about his person. P.<sub>3</sub>

*Ibid.* Dr. Stephen Hale, not more estimable for his useful discoveries as a natural Philosopher, than for his exemplary Life and Pastoral Charity as a Parish Priest.

VER. 199. *But grant, in Public, &c.*) In the former Editions, between this and the foregoing lines, a want of Connection might be perceived, occasioned by the omission of certain *Examples and Illustrations* to the Maxims laid down; and tho' some of these have since been found, viz. the Characters of *Philomede*, *Atossa*, *Cloe*, and some verses following, others are still wanting, nor can we answer that these are exactly inserted. P.

VER. 203. *Bred to disguise, in Public 'tis you hide;*) There is something particular in the turn of this assertion, as making their disguising in public the necessary effect of their being *bred to disguise*: but if we consider that female Education is an art of teaching not to be, but to appear, we shall have no reason to find fault with the exactness of the expression.

Bred to disguise, in Public 'tis you hide;  
 There, none distinguish 'twixt your Shame or Pride,  
 Weakness or Delicacy; all so nice, 205  
 That each may seem a Virtue, or a Vice.

In Men, we various Ruling Passions find;  
 In Women, two almost divide the kind;  
 Those, only fix'd, they first or last obey,  
 The Love of Pleasure, and the Love of Sway. 210

That, Nature gives; and where the lesson taught  
 Is but to please, can Pleasure seem a fault?  
 Experience, this; by Man's oppression curst,  
 They seek the second not to lose the first,

## NOTES

VER. 206. *That each may seem a Virtue or a Vice.* For Women are taught Virtue so artificially, and Vice so naturally, that, in the nice exercise of them, they may be easily mistaken for one another. SCRIBL.

VER. 207. The former part having shewn, that the *particular Characters* of Women are more various than those of Men, it is nevertheless observed, that the *general Characteristic* of the sex, as to the *ruling Passion*, is more uniform. P.

VER. 211. This is occasioned partly by their *Nature*, partly their *Education*, and in some degree by *Necessity*. P.

VER. 211, 212. — *and where the lesson taught — Is but to please can, &c.* The delicacy of the poet's address is here observable, in his manner of informing us what this *Pleasure* is, which makes one of the two objects of Woman's *ruling Passion*. He does it in an ironical apology for it, arising from its being a Pleasure of the *beneficent* and *communicative* kind, and not merely selfish, like those which the other sex generally pursues.

VER. 213. *Experience this, &c.* The ironical apology continued: That the Second is, as it were, forced upon them by the tyranny and oppression of man, in order to secure the first.

Ep. II. MORAL ESSAYS. 195

Men, some to Bus'ness, some to Pleasure take;  
But ev'ry Woman is at heart a Rake; 216  
Men, some to Quiet, some to public Strife;  
But ev'ry Lady would be Queen for life.

Yet mark the fate of a whole Sex of Queens!  
Pow'r all their end, but Beauty all the means: 220  
In Youth they conquer, with so wild a rage,  
As leaves them scarce a subject in their Age:  
For foreign glory, foreign joy, they roam;  
No thought of peace or happiness at home.  
But Wisdom's triumph is well-tim'd Retreat 225  
As hard a science to the Fair as Great!  
Beauties, like Tyrants, old and friendless grown,  
Yet hate repose; and dread to be alone,  
Worn out in public, weary ev'ry eye,  
Nor leave one sigh behind them when they die, 230

Pleasures the sex, as children Birds, pursue,  
Still out of reach, yet never out of view;  
Sure, if they catch, to spoil the Toy at most,  
To covet flying, and regret when lost:

NOTES

VER. 216. *But ev'ry Woman is at heart a Rake:*) „Some men (says the Poet) take to business, some to pleasure, but „every woman would willingly make *pleasure her business*: „which being the peculiar characteristic of a Rake, we must needs think that he includes (in his use of the word here) no more of the Rake's ill qualities than are implied in this definition, of *one who makes pleasure his business*.

VER. 219. What are the *Aims* and the *Fate* of this Sex;  
— I. As to *Power*. P.

VER. 231. — II. As to *Pleasure*. P.

VOL. III. P



At last, to follies Youth could scarce defend, 235  
 It grows their Age's prudence to pretend;  
 As Hags to own they gave delight before,  
 Reduce to feign it, when they give no more;  
 As Hags hold Sabbaths, less for joy than spight,  
 So these their merry, miserable Night; 240  
 Still round and round the Ghosts of Beauty glide,  
 And haunt the places, where their Honour dy'd.

See how the World its Veterans rewards!  
 A Youth of Frolicks, an old Age of Cards;  
 Fair to no purpose, artful to no end, 245  
 Young without Lovers, old without a Friend;  
 A Fop their Passion, but their Prize a Sor,  
 Alive, ridiculous, and dead, forgot!

Ah! Friend! to dazzle let the Vain design; 249  
 To raise the thought, and touch the Heart be thine!

## NOTES.

VER. 249. Advice for their true Interest. P.

VER. 253. *So when the Sun's broad beam, &c.* One of the great beauties observable in the poet's management of his *Similitudes*, is the ceremonious preparation he makes for them, in gradually raising the imagery of the similitude in the lines preceding, by the use of metaphors taken from the subject of it:

— while what fatigues the ring,

*Flaunts* and goes down, an unregarded thing.

And the civil dismissal he gives them by the continuance of the same metaphor, in the lines following, whereby the traces of the imagery gradually decay, and give place to others, and the reader is never offended with the sudden or abrupt disappearance of it,

Oh! blest with Temper. whose unclouded ray, &c.

Another instance of the same kind we have in this epistle, in the following lines,

That Charm shall grow, while what fatigues the Ring,  
 Flaunts and goes down, an unregarded thing:  
 So when the Sun's broad beam has tir'd the sight,  
 All mild ascends the Moon's more sober light,  
 Serene in Virgin Modesty she shines, 255  
 And unobserv'd the glaring Orb declines.

Oh! blest with Temper, whose unclouded ray  
 Can make to-morrow chearful as to-day:  
 She, who can love a Sister's charms, or hear  
 Sighs for a Daughter with unwounded ear; 260  
 She who ne'er answers till a Husband cools,  
 Or, if she rules him, never shews she rules;  
 Charms by accepting, by submitting sways,  
 Yet has her humour most, when she obeys;  
 Let Fops or Fortune fly which way they will; 265  
 Disdains all loss of Tickets, or Codille;  
 Spleen, Vapours, or Small-pox, above them all,  
 And Mistress of herself, tho' China fall.

And yet, believe me, good as well as ill,  
 Woman's at best a Contradiction still. 270

# NOTES.

Chuse a firm *cloud* before it fall, and in it  
 Catch, ere she *change*, the *Cynthia* of this minute.  
 Rusa, whose eye quick-glancing o'er the Park,  
*Attracts* each light gay *Meteor* of a *Spark*, &c.

VER. 269. The picture of an estimable Woman, with the best kind of contrarieties, created out of the poet's imagination; who therefore feigned those circumstances of a *Husband*, a *Daughter*, and love for a *Sister*, to prevent her being mistaken for any of his acquaintance. And having thus made his *Woman*, he did, as the ancient poets were wont, when they had made their *Muse*, invoke, and address his poem to her.

Heav'n, when it strives to polish all it can  
 Its last best work, but forms a softer Man;  
 Picks from each sex, to make the Fav'rite blest,  
 Your love of Pleasure, our desire of Rest:  
 Blends, in exception to all gen'ral rules, 275  
 Your taste of Follies, with our Scorn of Fools:  
 Reserve with Frankness, Art with Truth ally'd,  
 Courage with Softness, Modesty with Pride;  
 Fix'd Principles, with Fancy ever new;  
 Shakes all together, and produces --- You. 280  
 Be this a Woman's Fame: with this unblest,  
 Toasts live a scorn, and Queens may die a jest.  
 This Phœbus promis'd (I forget the year)  
 When those blue eyes first open'd on the sphere;  
 Ascendant Phœbus watch'd that hour with care,  
 Averted half your Parents' simple Pray'r; 286

## NOTES.

VER. 285. &c. *Ascendant Phœbus watch'd that hour with care, Averted half your Parents' simple Pray'r; And gave you Beauty, but deny'd the Self*) The poet concludes his Epistle with a fine *Moral*, that deserves the serious attention of the public: It is this, that all the extravagances of these *vicious* Characters here described, are much inflamed by a wrong Education, hinted at in v. 203; and that even the *best* are rather secured by a *good natural* than by the prudence and providence of parents; which observation is conveyed under the sublime classical machinery of Phœbus in the ascendant, watching the natal hour of his favourite, and averting the ill effects of her parents' mistaken fondness: For Phœbus, as the god of Wit, confers Genius; and, as one of the astronomical influences, defeats the adventitious bias of education.

In conclusion, the great Moral from both these Epistles together is, that the two rarest things in all Nature are a DISINTERESTED MAN, and a REASONABLE WOMAN.

And gave you Beauty, but deny'd the Pelf  
That buys your sex a Tyrant o'er itself,  
The gen'rous God, who Wit and Gold refines,  
And ripens Spirits as he ripens Mines, 290  
Kept Dross for Duchesses, the world shall know it,  
To you gave Sense, Good-humour, and a Poet.





# MORAL ESSAYS.

## EPISTLE III.

TO

ALLEN Lord BATHURST.

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### ARGUMENT

#### Of the Use of RICHES.

*THAT* it is known to few, most falling into one of the extremes, Avarice or Profusion, v. 1, &c. The Point discuss'd, whether the infection of Money has been more commodious, or pernicious to Mankind, v. 21 to 77. That Riches, either to the Avaricious or the Prodigal, cannot afford Happiness, scarcely Necessaries, v. 89 to 160. That Avarice is an absolute Frenzy, without an End or Purpose, v. 113, &c. 152. Conjectures about the Motives of Avaricious men, v. 121 to 153. That the conduct of men, with respect to Riches, can only be accounted for by the ORDER OF PROVIDENCE, which works the general Good out of Extremes, and brings all to its great End by perpetual Revolutions, v. 161 to 178. How a Miser acts upon Principles which appear to him reasonable, v. 179. How a Prodigal does the same, v. 199. The due Medium, and true use of Riches, v. 219. The Man of Rags, v. 250. The fate of the Profuse and the Covetous, in two examples; both miserable in Life and in Death, v. 300, &c. The Story of Sir Balaam, v. 339 to the end.





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Who sees pale Mammon pine amidst his Store,  
 Sees but a backward Steward for the Door;  
 This Year a Reservoir, to keep and spare,  
 The next a Fountain, spouting thro his Fleir.  
 Ep. on Riches.

## EPISTLE III.

P. **W**HO shall decide, when Doctors disagree,  
 And soundest Casuists doubt, like you  
 and me?  
 You hold the word, from Jove to Momus giv'n,

### COMMENTARY.

EPISTLE III.) This Epistle was written after a violent outcry against our Author, on a supposition that he had ridiculed a worthy nobleman merely for his wrong taste. He justified himself upon that article in a letter to the Earl of Burlington; at the end of which are these words: „I have learnt that there are „some who would rather be wicked than ridiculous; and therefore it may be safer to attack vices than follies. I will therefore leave my betters in the quiet possession of their idols, „their groves, and their high places; and change my subject „from their pride to their meanness, from their vanities to their „miseries; and as the only certain way to avoid misconstructions, „to lessen offence, and not to multiply ill-natured applications, „I may probably, in my next, make use of real names instead „of fictitious ones.,, P.

VER. 1. *Who shall decide, &c.*) The address of the *Introduction* (from v. 1 to 21.) is remarkable: The poet represents him-

### NOTES.

VER. 3. *Momus giv'n.*) Amongst the earliest abuses of reason, one of the first was to cavil at the ways of Providence. But as, in those times, every Vice as well as Virtue, had its Patron-God, MOMUS came to be at the head of the old *Free-thinkers*. Him, the Mythologists very ingeniously made the Son of *Sleep* and *Night*, and so, consequently, half-brother to *Dulness*. But having been much employed, in after ages, by the *Greek* *Satirists*, he came, at last, to pass for a *Wit*; and under this idea, he is to be considered in the place before us.

That Man was made the standing jest of Heav'n;  
 And Gold but sent to Keep the fools in play,     5  
 For some to heap, and some to throw away.

But I, who think more highly of our kind,  
 (And surely, Heav'n and I are of a mind)  
 Opine, that Nature, as in duty bound,

## COMMENTARY.

Self and the noble Lord his friend, as in a conversation, philosophising on the *final cause of Riches*; and it proceeds by way of dialogue, which most writers use to hide want of method; our Author only to soften and enliven the dryness and severity of it. *You* (says the poet)

— hold the word from Jove to Momus giv'n,  
 But I, who think more highly of our kind, &c.  
 Opine that Nature, &c.

As much as to say, „You, my Lord, hold the subject we are „upon as fit only for *Satire*; I, on the contrary, esteem it a „case of Philosophy, and profound *Ethics*: But as we both agree „in the main Principle, that *Riches were not given for the reward „of Virtue, but for very different purposes*. (See *Essay on Man*, Ep. iv.) „let us compromise the matter, and consider the subject jointly, „both under your idea and mine, *i. e. Satirically and Philosophi- „cally*. — And this, in fact, we shall find to be the true cha- „racter of this poem, which is a *Species* peculiar to itself, and par- „taking equally of the nature of his *Ethic Epistles* and his *Satires*, „as the best pieces of *Lucian* arose from a combination of the Dia- „logues of *Plato*, and the Scenes of *Aristophanes*. This it will be „necessary to carry with us, if we would see either the *Wit* or „the *Reasoning* of this Epistle in their true light,

## NOTES.

VER. 9. *Opine*.) A term sacred to controversy and high debate.

VER. 9. — *that Nature, as in duty bound*.) This, though ludicrously, is yet exactly, expressed; to shew, that, by *Nature*, the poet meant, not the God of nature, but the instrument and substitute of his providence.

Deep hid the shining mischief under ground: 10  
 But when by Man's audacious labour won,  
 Flam'd forth this rival to its Sire, the Sun,  
 Then careful Heav'n supply'd two sorts of Men,  
 To squander These, and Those to hide again.

Like Doctors thus, when much dispute has past,  
 We find our tenets just the same at last, 16  
 Both fairly owning, Riches, in effect,  
 No grace of Heav'n or token of th' Elect;  
 Giv'n to the Fool, the Mad, the Vain, the Evil,  
 To Ward, to Waters, Chartres, and the Devil. 20

NOTES.

VER. 12. *Flam'd forth this rival to, its Sire, the Sun,*) The rival of its Sire in its brightness, and in its power of drawing mankind into error and delusion: the two first idols of the world, *natural* and *moral*, being the *Sun* and *Gold*.

VER. 20. JOHN WARD of Hackney Esq. Member of Parliament, being prosecuted by the Duchess of Buckingham, and convicted of Forgery, was first expelled the House, and then stood in the Pillory on the 17th of March 1727. He was suspected of joining in a conveyance with Sir John Blunt, to secrete fifty thousand pounds of that Director's Estate, forfeited to the South-Sea company by Act of Parliament. The Company recovered the fifty thousand pounds against Ward; but he set up prior conveyances of his real estate to his brother and son, and conceal'd all his personal, which was computed to be one hundred and fifty thousand pounds. These conveyances being also set aside by a bill in Chancery, Ward was imprisoned, and hazarded the forfeiture of his life, by not giving in his effects till the last day, which was that of his examination. During his confinement, his amusement was to give poison to dogs and cats, and see them expire by slower or quicker torments. To sum up the *worth* of this gentleman, at the several *acts* of his life, At his standing in the Pillory he was *worth above two hundred thousand pounds*; at his commitment to Prison, he was *worth*



B. What Nature wants, commodious Gold bestows,  
'Tis thus we eat the bread another sows.

## COMMENTARY.

VER. 21. *What Nature wants, &c.*) Having thus settled the terms of the *Debate*, before he comes to the *main Question*, the

## NOTES.

*above two hundred and fifty thousand*; but has been since so far diminished in his reputation, as to be thought a *worse man* by *fifty or sixty thousand*. P.

FR. CHARTRES, a man infamous for all manner of vices. When he was an ensign in the army, he was drumm'd out of the regiment for a cheat; he was next banish'd Brussels, and drumm'd out of Ghent on the same account. After a hundred tricks at the gaming-tables, he took to lending of money at exorbitant interest and on great penalties, accumulating premium, interest, and capital into a new capital, and seizing to a minute when the payments became due; in a word, by a constant attention to the vices, wants, and follies of mankind, he acquired an immense fortune. His house was a perpetual Bawdy house. He was twice condemn'd for rapes, and pardoned; but the last time not without imprisonment in Newgate, and large confiscations. He died in Scotland in 1731, aged 62. The populace at his funeral rais'd a great riot, almost tore the body out of the coffin, and cast dead dogs, &c. into the grave along with it. The following Epitaph contains his character very justly drawn by Dr. Arbuthnot:

## HERE

continueth to rest  
The body of

## FRANCIS CHARTRES,

Who, with an INFLEXIBLE CONSTANCY,  
and INIMITABLE UNIFORMITY of Life,

PERSISTED,

In spite of AGE and INFIRMITIES,

In the Practice of EVERY HUMAN VICE;

Excepting PRODIGALITY and HYPOCRISY:

His insatiable AVARICE exempted him from the first,  
His matchless IMPUDENCE from the second.

P. But how unequal it bestows, observe,  
'Tis thus we riot, while, who sow it, starve:

## COMMENTARY.

*Use of Riches*, it was necessary to discuss a *previous* one, whether indeed they are, upon the whole, *useful to mankind or not*; (which he does from v. 20 to 77.) It is commonly observed, says he (from v. 21 to 35.) *That Gold most commodiously supplies the wants of Nature*: „Let us first consider the proposition in general, both in *Matter and Expression*; 1. As it regards the *Supply*; „and this we shall find to be very *unequal*: 2. As it regards the „*Wants*; and these, we shall see, are very *ambiguous*; under

## NOTES.

Nor was he more singular  
in the undeviating *Pravity* of his *Manners*,  
Than successful  
in *Accumulating* WEALTH;  
For, without TRADE or PROFESSION,  
Without TRUST of PUBLIC MONEY,  
And without BRIBE - WORTHY Service,  
HE acquired, or more properly created,  
A MINISTERIAL ESTATE.  
HE was the only Person of his Time,  
Who could CHEAT without the Mask of HONESTY,  
Retain his Primeval MEANNESS  
When possessed of TEN THOUSAND a Year  
And having daily deserved the GIBBET for what he *did*,  
Was at last condemned to it for what he *could not do*.  
Oh Indignant Reader!  
Think not his Life useless to Mankind!  
PROVIDENCE conniv'd at his execrable Designs,  
To give to After-ages  
A conspicuous PROOF and EXAMPLE,  
Of how small Estimation is EXORBITANT WEALTH  
in the Sight of  
GOD,  
By his bestowing it on the most UNWORTHY of ALL  
MORTALS.

What Nature wants (a phrase I much distrust) 25  
 Extends to Luxury, extends to Lust:

## COMMENTARY

„that term, all our fantastic and imaginary, as well as real wants  
 „being comprized. Hitherto the use is not very apparent. Let  
 „us in the second place, therefore, consider the proposition in  
 „particular, or how Gold supplies the *wants of Nature* both in  
 „private and public life: 1. As to *private*; it aids us, indeed, to  
 „support life; but it, at the same time, hires the assassin. 2. As  
 „to *Society*; it may procure Friendships and extend Trade; but  
 „it allures Robbers, and corrupts our acquaintance. 3. As to  
 „*Government*; it pays the Guards necessary for the support of  
 „public liberty; but it may, with the same ease, bribe a Senate  
 „to overturn it..

The master, therefore, being thus problematical, the poet, instead of formally balancing between the *Good* and *Ill*, chuses to

## NOTES.

This Gentleman was worth seven thousand pounds a year estate in Land, and about one hundred thousand in Money. P.

Mr. WATERS, the tird of these worthies, was a man no way resembling the former in his military, but extremely so in his civil capacity; his great fortune having been rais'd by the like diligent attendance on the necessities of others. But this gentleman's history must be deferred till his death, when his *worth* may be known more certainly. P.

VER. 20. — *Charities and the Devil.*) Alluding to the vulgar opinion, that all mines of metal and subterraneous treasures are in the guard of the Devil: which seems to have taken its rise from the pagan fable of Pluto the God of Riches.

VER. 21. *What Nature wants, commodious Gold bestows,*) The epithet *commodious* gives us the very proper idea of a *Bawd* or *Pander*; and this thought produced the two following lines, which were in all the former editions, but, for their bad reasoning, omitted,

And if we count amongst the needs of life  
 Another's Toil, why not another's Wife;

Useful, I grant, it serves what life requires,  
But dreadful too, the dark Assassin hires :

COMMENTARY.

leave this *previous Question undetermined* (as *Tacitus* had done before him ; where , speaking of the ancient *Germans*, he says, *Argentum & aurum propitii aut irati Dii negaverint dubio*;) and falls at once upon what he esteems the *Principal* of these abuses, *public Corruption*,

For having in the last instance , of the *Use of Riches* in Government, spoken of *venal Senates*,—he goes on to lament the mischief as desperate and remediless : *Gold*, by its power to corrupt with *Secrecy*, defeating all the efforts of public Spirit, whether exerted in the Courage of Heroes, or in the Wisdom of Patriots,

'Tis true indeed (continues the poet from v. 34 to 49.) the very weight of the Bribery has sometimes detected the Corruption :

From the crack'd bag the dropping Guinea spoke, &c.

But this inconvenience was soon repaired, 'By the invention of *Paper credit* : Whose dreadful effects on public Liberty he describes in all the colouring of his poetry, heightened by the warmest concern for virtue ; which now makes him willing to give up, as it were, the *previous question*, in a passionate wish (from v. 48 to 59.) for the return of that incumbrance attendant on public Corruption, *where* the so *common* use of money.

And pleased with this flattering idea, he goes on (from v. 58 to 77.) to shew the other advantages that would accrue from *Riches only in kind* : which are, that neither *Avarice* could contrive to hoard, nor *Prodigality* to lavish, in so mad and boundless a manner as they do at present. Here he shews particularly, in a fine ironical description of the embarras on *Gaming*, how effectually it would eradicate that execrable practice.

But this whole *Digression* (from v. 33 to 77.) has another very uncommon beauty ; for, at the same time that it arises naturally from the *last* consideration in the debate of the *previous Question*, it artfully denounces, in our entrance the *main Question*, the principal topics intended to be employed for the dilucidation of it, namely *AVARICE*, *PROFUSION*, and *PUBLIC CORRUPTION*.

B. Trade it may help, Society extend.

P. But lures the Pyrate, and corrupts the Friend.

B. It raises Armies in a Nation's aid. 31

P. But bribes a Senate, and the Land's betray'd,

In vain may Heroes fight, and Patriots rave;

If secret Gold sap on from knave to knave.

Once, we confess, beneath the Patriot's cloak, 35

From the crack'd bag the dropping Guinea spoke,

And gingling down the back-stairs; told the crew,

„Old Cato is as great a Rogue as you.,,

Blest paper-credit! last and best supply!

That lends Corruption lighter wings to fly! 40

Gold imp'd by thee, can compass hardest things,

#### NOTES.

VER. 33. — *and Patriots rave;*) The character of modern Patriots was, in the opinion of our poet, very equivocal; as the name was undistiguishingly bestowed on every one in opposition to the court; of whose virtues he gives a hint in v. 139. of this Epistle. Agreeably to these sentiments, his predicate of them here is as equivocal,

In vain — may Patriots rave; which they may do either in earnest or in jest; and is a conduct, in the opinion of *Sempronius* in the Play, best fitted to hide their game.

VER. 34. *If secret Gold sap on from knave to knave.*) The expression is fine, and gives us the image of a place invested, where the approaches are made by communications which support each other; as the connexions amongst knaves, after they have been taken in by state engineer, serve to screen and encourage one another's private corruptions.

VER. 35. — *beneath the Patriot's cloak.*) This is a true story, which happened in the reign of William III. to an unsuspected old Patriot, who coming out at the back-door from having been cloistered by the King, where he had received a large bag of Guineas, the bursting of the bag discovered his business there. P.



Can pocket States can fetch or carry Kings;  
 A single leaf shall waft an Army o'er,  
 Or ship off Senates to a distant Shore;  
 A leaf, like Sibyl's, scatter to and fro 45  
 Our fates and fortunes, as the winds shall blow:  
 Pregnant with thousands flits the Scrap unseen,  
 And silent sells a King, or buys a Queen.

Oh! that such bulky Bribes as all might see,  
 Still, as of old, incumber'd Villainy! 50  
 Could France or Rome divert our brave designs,  
 With all their brandies or with all their wines?

## VARIATIONS.

After v. 50. in the MS.

To break a trust were Peter brib'd with wine  
 Peter! 'twould pose as wise a head as thine.

## NOTES.

VER. — *fetch or carry Kings;*) In our author's time, many Princes had been sent about the world, and great changes of Kings projected in Europe. The partition-treaty had disposed of Spain; France had set up a King for England, who was sent to Scotland, and back again; King Stanislaus was sent to Poland, and back again; the Duke of Anjou was sent to Spain, and Don Carlos to Italy. P.

VER. 44. *Or ship-off Senates to some distant Shore;*) Alludes to several Ministers, Counsellors, and Patriots banished in our times to Siberia, and to that MORE GLORIOUS FATE of the PARLIAMENT of PARIS, banished to Pontoise in the year 1720. P.

VER. 47. *Pregnant with thousands flits the Scrap unseen*) The imagery is very sublime, and alludes to the course of a destroying pestilence. The Psalmist, in his expression of *the Pestilence that walketh in darkness*, supplied him with the grandeur of his idea.

What could they more than Knights and Squires  
confound,

Or water all the Quorum ten miles round ?

A statesman's slumbers how this speech would spoil !

„Sir, Spain has sent a thousand jars of oil ; 56

„Huge bales of British cloth blockade the door ;

„A hundred oxen at your levee roar.,

Poor Avarice one torment more would find ;

Nor could Profusion squander all in kind. 60

Astride his cheese Sir Morgan might we meet ;

And Worldly crying coals from street to street,

Whom with a wig so wild, and mien so maz'd,

Pity mistakes for some poor tradesman craz'd.

Had Colepepper's whole wealth been hops and hogs,

Could he himself have sent it to the dogs? 66

His Grace will game ; to White's a Bull be led,

With spurning heels and with a butting head.

To White's be carry'd, as to ancient games,

Fair Coursers, Vases, and alluring Dames. 70

#### NOTES.

VER. 63. Some Misers of great wealth, proprietors of the coal-mines, had entered at this time into an Association to keep up coals to an extravagant price, whereby the poor were reduced almost to starve, till one of them taking the advantage of underfelling the rest, defeated the design. One of these Misers was worth ten thousand, another seven thousand a year, P.

VER. 65. Colepepper) Sir WILLIAM COLEPEPPER, Bart. a Person of an ancient family, and ample fortune, without one other quality of a Gentleman, who, after ruining himself at the Gaming-table, past the rest of his days in sitting there to see the ruin of others; preferring to subsist upon borrowing and begging, rather than to enter into any reputable method of life, and refusing a Post in the army which was offered him. P.

Shall then Uxorio, if the stakes he sweep,  
 Bear home six Whores, and make his Lady weep?  
 Or soft Adonis so perfum'd and fine,  
 Drive to St. James's a whole herd of swine?  
 Oh filthy check on all industrious skill, 75  
 To spoil the nation's last great trade, Quadrille!  
 Since then, my Lord, on such a World we fall,  
 What say you? B. Say? Why take it, Gold and all.  
 P. What Riches give us let us then enquire:  
 Meat: Fire, and Cloaths. B. What more? P. Meat,  
 Cloaths, and Fire. 80

VARIATIONS.

VER. 77. *Since then, &c.* In the former Ed.  
 Well then, since with the world we stand or fall,  
 Come take it as we find it, Gold and all.

COMMENTARY.

VER. 77. *Since then, my Lord, on such a World, &c.* Having thus ironically described the incumbrance which the want of money would occasion to all criminal excesses in the use of Riches, particularly to *Gaming*, which being now become of public concern, he affects much regard to:

Oh filthy check on all industrious skill,  
 To spoil the Nation's last great trade, Quadrille!  
 he concludes the *previous Question* without deciding it, in the same *ironical* manner,

Since then, my Lord, on such a World we fall:  
 What say you? Say? Why take it, Gold and all.  
 That is, since for these great purposes we must have *Money*, let us now *seriously* inquire into its *true Use*.

VER. 79. *What riches give us &c.* He examines therefore in the *first* place (from v. 78 to 97.) I. *Of what Use Riches are to ourselves:*

Is this too little? would you more than live?

Alas! 'tis more than Turner finds they give.

Alas! 'tis more than (all his Visions past)

#### COMMENTARY.

What Riches give us let us then enquire:

Meat, Fire, and Cloaths. What more? Meath, Cloaths,  
and Fire.

The mere *turn* of the expression here shews, without further reasoning, that all the infinite ways of spending *on ourselves*, contrived in the insolence of Wealth, by those who would *more than live*, are only these *three* things diversified throughout every wearied mode of Luxury and Wantonness,

Yet as little as this is, adds the poet (from v. 81 to 85.) it is only to be had by the *moderate use* of Riches; *Avarice* and *Profusion* not allowing the possessors of the most exorbitant wealth even this little:

Alas! 'tis more than *Turner* finds they give.

Alas! 'tis more than (all his visions past)

Unhappy *Wharton*, waking, found at last!

But what is it you would expect them to give? continues the poet (from v. 84 to 91.) Would you have them capable of *restoring* those *real* blessings, which men have *lost* by their *Vices* or their *Villainies*; or of *satisfying* those *imaginary* ones, which they have *gotten* by their *irregular Appetites* and *Passions*? These, sure,

#### NOTES.

VER. 82. *Turner*) One, who, being possessed of three hundred thousand pounds, laid down his Coach, because Interest was reduced from five to four *per cent.* and then put seventy thousand into the Charitable Corporation for better interest; which sum having lost, he took it so much to heart, that he kept his chamber ever after. It is thought he would not have outlived it, but that he was heir to another considerable estate, which he daily expected. and that by this course of life he saved both cloaths and all other expences.

P.

Unhappy Wharton, waking, found at last!  
What can they give? to dying Hopkins, Heirs;—85

COMMENTARY.

the bad or foolish man cannot have the face to demand; and *these*, by the wise provision of Nature, Riches are incapable of giving, if he had.

But now admit, pursues our author (from v. 90 to 97.) that wealth might, in some cases, alleviate the unmerited miseries of life, by procuring medicines both for the mind and body; yet it is not to be thought it should operate like a charm, while only worn about one: Yet this, these *poor men of pelf* expect from it; while *Avarice* on the one hand, with-holds them from giving at all, even to the *Doctor* in extremity; or *Vanity* diverts the donation from a *Friend* in life, to the Endowment of a *Car* or *College* at their death. It is true, *Riches* might give the greatest of all blessings, a *virtuous consciousness* of our having employed them as became the *substitutes of Providence*,

To ease or emulate the care of Heav'n, v. 230.  
in acts of BENEFICENCE and CHARITY; and this *Use* is next to be considered.

NOTES.

VER. 84. *Unhappy Wharton*.) A Nobleman of great qualities, but as unfortunate in the application of them, as if they had been vices and follies. See his Character in the first Epistle. P.

VER. 85. *Hopkins*.) A Citizen, whose rapacity obtained him the name of *Vulture Hopkins*. He lived worthless, but died worth three hundred thousand pounds, which he would give to no person living, but left it so as not to be inherited till after the second generation. His counsel representing to him how many years it must be, before this could take effect, and that his money could only lie at interest all that time, he expressed great joy thereat, and said, „They would then be as long in spending, „as he had been in getting it.„ But the Chancery afterwards set aside the will, and gave it to the heir at law. P.



To Chartres, Vigour; Japhet, Nose and Ears?  
 Can they, in gems bid pallid Hippias glow,  
 In Fulvia's buckle ease the throbs below;  
 Or heal, old Narfes, thy obscurer ail,  
 With all th'embroid'ry plaister'd at thy tail? 90  
 They might (were Harpax not too wise to spend)  
 Give Harpax self the blessing of a Friend;  
 Or find some Doctor that would save the life  
 Of wretched Shylock, spite of Shylock's Wife:  
 But thousands die, without or this or that. 95  
 Die, and endow a College, or a Cat;  
 To some, indeed, Heav'n grants the happier fate,  
 T'enrich a Bastard, or a Son they hate,

## COMMENTARY.

VER. 97. *To some, indeed, &c.*) For now the poet comes, in the second place, to examine, II. *Of what use Riches are to others*; which he teaches, as is his way throughout this poem, by the *abuse* that stands oppos'd to it: Thus he shews (from v. 96 to 107.) that with regard to acts of *Beneficence*, the utmost Heaven will grant to those who so greatly abuse its blessings, is

## NOTES.

VER. 86. *Japhet Nose and Ear's?*) JAPHET CROOK, alias Sir Peter Stranger, was punished with the loss of those parts, for having forged a conveyance of an Estate to himself, upon which he took up several thousand pounds. He was at the same time sued in Chancery for having fraudulently obtained a Will, by which he possessed another considerable Estate, in wrong of the brother of the deceased. By these means he was worth a great sum, which (in reward for the small loss of his ears) he enjoyed in prison till his death, and quietly left to his executor. P.

VER. 96. *Die, and endow a College, or a Cat.*) A famous Dutchess of R. in her last Will left considerable legacies and annuities to her Cats. P.

Perhaps you think the Poor might have their part.  
Bond damns the Poor, and hates them from his heart:  
The grave Sir Gilbert holds it for a rule 101  
That ev'ry man in want is knave or fool;

## COMMENTARY.

either to enrich some favourite *Bastard*, and so perpetuate their vice and infamy; or else, contrary to their intent, a legitimate *Son they hated*, and so expose to public scorn and ridicule, the defeat of their unnatural cruelty. But with regard to acts of *Charity*, they are given up to so reprobate a sense, as to believe they are then seconding the designs of Heaven, when they pursue the indigent with imprecations, or leave them in the midst of their distresses unrelieved, as the common enemies of God and Man.

## NOTES.

VER. 100. *Bond damns the Poor; &c.*) This epistle was written in the year 1730, when a corporation was established to lend money to the poor upon pledges, by the name of the *Charitable Corporation*; but the whole was turned only to an iniquitous method of enriching particular people, to the ruin of such numbers, that it became a parliamentary concern to endeavour the relief of those unhappy sufferers, and three of the managers, who were members of the house, were expelled. By the report of the Committee, appointed to enquire into that iniquitous affair, it appears, that when it was objected to the intended removal of the office, that the Poor, for whose use it was erected, would be hurt by it, Bond, one of the Directors, replied, *Damn the Poor*. That „God hates the poor,“ and, „That „every man in want is knave or fool,“ &c. were the genuine apothegms of some of the persons here mentioned. P.

VER. 102. *That ev'ry man in want is knave or fool:*) None are more subject to be deluded by this vain mistake, that *prudence does all in human affairs*, than those who have been most befriended by Fortune. The reason is, that, in this situation *Prudence* has never been brought to the test, nor *Vanity* ever mortified. So that *Prudence* will be always ready to take to herself what fortune encourages *Vanity* to call her due. And then want of success will of course be imputed to want of wit.

„God cannot love (says Blunt, with tearless eyes)  
 „The wretch he starves“ --- and piously denies;  
 But the good Bishop with a meeker air, 105  
 Admits, and leaves them, Providence's care.

Yet to be just to these poor men of pelf,  
 Each does but hate his neighbour as himself:

## COMMENTARY.

VER. 107. *Yet, to be just, &c.*) Having thus shewn the *true use* of Riches in a description of the *abuse*, and how that use is perpetually defeated by *Profusion* and *Avarice*; it was natural to enquire into the spring and original of these vices; as the mischiefs they occasion, must be well understood, before they can be corrected. The disposition of his matter, therefore, now calls upon him to come to the *Philosophy* of his subject: And he examines particularly into the *Motives of Avarice*: But what is observable, he, all along, satirically intermixes with the *real motives*,

## NOTES

VER. 105. *But the good Bishop; &c.*) In this place, and in the first Dialogue of 1738, the Poet had named a very worthy Person of condition, who for a course of many years had shined in public Stations much to the advantage and honour of his Country. But being at once oppressed by popular prejudice and a public censure, it was no wonder, the poet, to whom he was personally a stranger, should think hardly of him. I had the honour to be well known to this truly illustrious Person, and to be greatly obliged by him. From my intimate knowledge of his Character, I was fully persuaded of his innocence, and that he was unwarily drawn in by a pack of infamous Cheats, to his great loss of fortune as well as reputation. At my request, therefore, the poet with much satisfaction retracted, and struck out, in both places, his ill-grounded censure. I have since had the pleasure to understand, from the best authority, that my favourable sentiments of him have lately been fully justified in the course of some proceedings in the high court of Chancery, the most unerring investigator of Truth and Falsehood.

Damn'd to the Mines, an equal fate betides  
 The Slave that digs it, and the Slave that hides.  
 B. Who suffer thus, mere Charity should own,  
 Must act on motives pow'rful, tho' unknown.  
 P. Some War, some Plague, or Famine they foresee,  
 Some Revelation hid from you and me.

## COMMENTARY

several *imaginary*; and those as wild as imagination could conceive. This, which at first sight might seem to vitiate the purpose of his *philosophical inquiry*, is found, when duly considered, to have the highest art of design. His business, the reader sees, was to prove that the *real motives* had the utmost extravagancy: Nothing could more conduce to this end, than the setting them by, and comparing them with, the most whimsical, the fancy itself could invent; in which situation it was seen, that the *real* were full as wild as the *fictitious*. To give these images all the force they were capable of, he first describes (from v. 118 to 123.) the *real* motive, and an imaginary, one different from the real, in the *same person*: and then (from v. 122 to 133.) an *imaginary* one, and a *real* the very same with the imaginary, in *different persons*. This address the poet himself hints at, v. 155.

Less mad the wildest whimsey we can frame, &c,

Let me observe, that this has still a further beauty, arising from the *nature* of the poem, which (as we have shewn) is partly *satirical*, and partly *philosophical*. — With regard to the *particular* beauties of this disposition, I shall only take notice of one; where the poet introduces the *fictitious* motive of Blunt's avarice, by a wizard's prophecy:

„At length Corruption, like a gen'ral flood  
 „(So long by watchful Ministers withstood)  
 „Shall deluge all; and *Av'rice* creeping on  
 „Spread like a low-born mist, and blot the Sun, &c.  
 „See Britain sunk in lucre's sordid charms,  
 „And France reveng'd on Anne's and Edward's arms!

For it was the poet's purpose to shew, that the *main* and *principal abuse* of Riches arises from AVARICE.



Why Shylock wants a meal, the cause is found,  
 He thinks a Loaf will rise to fifty pound. 116  
 What made Directors cheat in South-sea year?  
 To live on Ven'son when it sold so dear.  
 Ask you why Phryne the Whole Auction buys?  
 Phryne foresees a general Excise. 120  
 Why she and Sappho raise that monstrous sum?  
 Alas! they fear a man will cost a plum.

Wife Peter sees the World's respect for Gold,  
 And therefore hopes this Nation may be sold:  
 Glorious Ambition! Peter, swell thy store, 125  
 And be what Rome's great Didius was before.

The Crown of Poland, venal twice an age,  
 To just three millions stinted modest Gage.

## NOTES.

VER. 118. *To live on Ven'son*) In the extravagance and luxury of the South-sea year, the price of a haunch of Venison was from three to five pounds. P.

VER. 120. — *general Excise*) Many people about the year 1733, had a conceit that such a thing was intended, of which it is not improbable this lady might have some intimation. P.

VER. 123. *Wife Peter*) PETER WALTER, a person not only eminent in the Wisdom of his profession, as a dextrous attorney, but allowed to be a good, if not a safe, conveyancer; extremely respected by the Nobility of this land, tho' free from all manner of luxury and ostentation: his Wealth was never seen, and his bounty never heard of, except to his own son, for whom he procured an employment of considerable profit, of which he gave him as much as was necessary. Therefore the taxing this gentleman with any Ambition, is certainly a great wrong to him. P.

VER. 126. *Rome's great Didius*) A Roman Lawyer, so rich as to purchase the Empire when it was set to sale upon the death of Pertinax. P.

VER. 127. *The Crown of Poland, &c.*) The two persons here mentioned were of Quality, each of whom in the Mississippi



But nobler scenes Maria's dreams unfold,  
Hereditary Realms, and worlds of Gold. 130  
Congenial souls ! whose life one Av'rice joins,  
And one fate buries in th' Asturian Mines.

Much injur'd Blunt ! why bears he Britain's hate ?  
A wizard told him in these words our fate :  
„At length Corruption, like a gen'ral flood, 135  
„(So long by watchful Ministers withstood)  
„Shall deluge all ; and Av'rice creeping on,

NOTES.

despis'd to realize above *three hundred thousand pounds*; the Gentleman with a view to the purchase of the Crown of Poland, the Lady on a vision of the like royal nature. They since retired into Spain, where they are still in search of gold in the mines of the Asturias. P.

VER. 133. *Much injur'd Blunt !*) Sir JOHN BLUNT; originally a scrivener, was one of the first projectors of the South-sea company, and afterwards one of the directors and chief managers of the famous scheme in 1720. He was also one of those who suffer'd most severely by the bill of pains and penalties on the said directors. He was a Dissenter of a most religious deportment, and profess'd to be a great believer. Whether he did really credit the prophecy here mentioned is not certain, but it was constantly in this very style he declaimed against the corruption and luxury of the age, the partiality of Parliaments, and the misery of party-spirit. He was particularly eloquent against *Avarice* in great and noble persons, of which he had indeed lived to see many miserable examples. He died in the year 1732. P.

VER. 137. — *Av'rice creeping on, Spread like a low-born mist, and blot the Sun*;) The similitude is extremely apposite, implying that this vice is of base and mean original; hatched and nursed up amongst Scriveners, Stock-jobbers, and City; and unknown, 'till of late, to the Nobles of this land : But now, in the fulness of time, she rears her head, and aspires to cover the most illustrious stations in her dark and pestilential shade. The Sun, and other luminaries of Heaven, signifying, in the high eastern style, the Grandees and Nobles of the earth.

„Spread like a low-born mist, and blot the Sun;  
 „Statesman and Patriot ply alike the stocks,  
 „Peerefs and Butler share alike the Box, 140  
 „And Judges job, and Bishops bite the town,  
 „And mighty Dukes pack cards for half a crown.  
 „See Britain sunk in lucre's sordid charms,  
 „And France reveng'd of ANNE's and EDWARD's  
 „arms! „

'Twas no Court-badge, great Scriv'ner! fir'd thy brain,  
 Nor lordly Luxury, nor City Gain: 146  
 No, 'twas thy righteous end, aham'd to see  
 Senates degen'rate, Patriots disagree,  
 And nobly wishing Party-rage to cease,  
 To buy both sides, and give thy Country peace; 150

„All this is madness,“ cries a sober sage:  
 But who, my friend, has reason in his rage?

## COMMENTARY.

VER. 151. „*All this is madness*,“ &c.) But now the Sage, who has confined himself to books, which prescribe the government of the passions: and never looked out upon the world, where he might see them let loose, and, like Milton's devils, *viding the air in whirlwind*, cries out, *All this is madness*. True, replies the poet (from v. 151 to 177.) but this madness is a common one, and only to be prevented by a severe attention to the rule laid down in the *Essay*,

Reason still use. to reason still attend, Ep. ii. v. 68.  
 for amongst the generality of men, and without the greatest circumspection,

The ruling passion, be it what it will,

The ruling Passion conquers reason still.

But then (continues he) as senseless as this passion appears, by the sway of its overbearing bias, it would be still more senseless had it no bias at all. You have seen us here intermix with the

„The ruling Passion, be it what it will,  
 „The ruling Passion conquers Reason still.,  
 40 Less mad the wildest whimsey we can frame, 155  
 Than ev'n that Passion, if it has no Aim;  
 For tho' such motives Folly you may call,  
 The Folly's greater to have none at all.

Hear then the truth: „'Tis Heav'n each Passion sends,  
 „And diff'rent men directs to diff'rent ends, 160

COMMENTARY.

real, the most fantastical and extravagant that imagination could invent; yet even these are less extravagant than a *ruling Passion without a constant aim*. Would you know the reason? then listen to this important truth: „Tis HEAVEN itself that gives the „*ruling Passion*; and thereby directs different men to different ends: „But these being exerted through the ministry of NATURE (of „whom the great Bacon truly observes, *modum revere nescia est*, „Aug. Scient. l. ii. c. 13.) they are very apt to run into extremes: To correct which, Heaven, at the same time, added the „*moderatrix Reason*; not to take the *ruling Passion* out of the „hands and ministry of Nature, but to restrain and rectify its „irregular impulses (See Essay Ep. ii. v. 151, & seq.) and what extremes, after this, remained uncorrected in the administration of „this weak Queen (v. 140. Ep. ii.) the divine artist himself has, „in his heavenly skill and bounty, set to rights; by so ordering, „that these of the *moral*, like those of the *natural* world, should, „even by the very means of their contrariety and diversity, con- „cur to defeat the malignity of one another:

Extremes in Nature equal good produce,

Extremes in Man concur to gen'ral use.

„For as the various seasons of the year are supported and su- „stained by the reconciled extremes of *Wet* and *Dry*, *Cold* and „*Heat*; so all the orders and degrees of civil life are kept up by „*Avarice* and *Profusion*, *Selfishness* and *Vanity*. The Miser being „but the Steward of the Prodigal; and only so much the more „backward as the other is violent and precipitate: „

This year a Reservoir, to keep and spare;

The next a Fountain spouting thro' his heir.

„Extremes in Nature equal good produce,  
 „Extremes in Man concur to gen'ral use,  
 Ask we what makes one keep, and one bestow?  
 That Pow'r who bids the Ocean ebb and flow,  
 Bids seed-time, harvest, equal course maintain, 165  
 Thro' reconcil'd extremes of drought and rain,  
 Builds Life on Death, on Change Duration founds,  
 And gives th'eternal wheels to know their rounds.

Riches, like insects, when conceal'd they lie,  
 Wait but for wings, and in their season fly. 173  
 Who sees pale Mammon pine amidst his store,  
 Sees but a backward steward for the Poor;  
 This year a Reservoir, to keep and spare;

## NOTES.

VER. 173. *This year a Reservoir, to keep and spare; The next, a Fountain, (spouting thro' his Heir,)* Besides the obvious beauties of this fine similitude, it has one still more exquisite, tho' less observable, which is its being taken from a circumstance in the most elegant part of improved life. For tho' in Society, the follies of hoarding and squandering may correct each other, and produce real advantage to the whole; as Reservoirs and Fountains may be both useful and ornamental amongst the other improvements of art; yet in a State of Nature either kind of excess, would be pernicious; because, in that State, the quantity of natural goods, unimproved by art, would not suffer, without great danger of want to the whole body, either an immoderate hoarding, or a lavish profusion. And therefore Providence has wisely ordered that, in that State, by there being no fantastic wants, there should be no possible temptation to either. Which noble truth our poet hints at in the beginning of the Epistle:

But when by Man's audacious labour won,  
 Flam'd forth this Rival to it's Sire, the sun,  
 Then careful Heav'n supply'd two sorts of men,  
 To squander These, and These to hide again. v. II, &c.

The next, a Fountain, spouting thro' his Heir,  
In lavish streams to quench a Country's thirst, 175  
And men and dogs shall drink him till they burst.

Old Corra sham'd his fortune and his birth,  
Yet was not Corra void of wit or worth:

## COMMENTARY.

VER. 177. *Old Corra sham'd his fortune &c.*) The poet now proceeds to support the principles of his Philosophy by *examples*: But before we come to these, it will be necessary to look back upon the general œconomy of the poem.

In the first part, to v. 109, the *use* and *abuse* of Riches are satirically delivered in *precept*. From thence, to v. 177, the causes of the abuse are *philosophically* inquired into: And from thence to the end, the *use* and *abuse* are *historically* illustrated in *examples*. Where we may observe, that the conclusion of the *first* part, concerning the Miser's cruelty to others, naturally introduces the *second*, by a satirical apology, shewing that he is full as cruel to himself: The explanation of which extraordinary phenomenon brings the author into the *Philosophy* of his subject; and this ending in an observation of Avarice and Profusion's correcting and reconciling one another, as naturally introduces the *third*, which proves the truth of the observation from *fact*. And thus the *Philosophy* of his subject standing between his *Precepts* and *Examples*, gives strength and light to both, and receives it reflected back again from both.

He first gives us two examples (from v. 176 to 219.) of these opposite *ruling Passions*, and (to see them in their full force) taken from *subjects*, as he tells us, *not void of wit or worth*; from such as could *reason* themselves (as we see by v. 183, & seq. and v. 205, & seq.) into the whole length of each extreme: For the Poet had observed of the *ruling passion* that

Wit, Spirit, Faculties, but make it worse;

Reason itself but gives it edge and pow'r.

*Essay, Ep. ii. v. 146.*

Old Corra therefore and his son afforded him the most happy illustration of his doctrine.



What tho' (the use of barb'rous spits forgot)  
 His kitchen vy'd in coolness with his grot? 180  
 His court with nettles, moats with cresses stor'd,  
 With soups unbought and fallads blest'd his board?  
 If Cotta liv'd on pulse, it was no more  
 Than Bramins, Saints, and Sages did before;  
 To cram the rich was prodigal expence, 185  
 And who would take the Poor from Providence?  
 Like some lone Chartreux stands the good old Hall,  
 Silence without, and fasts within the wall;  
 No rafter'd roofs with dance and rabor found,  
 No noontide bell invites the country round: 190  
 Tenants with sighs the smoakless tow'r's survey,  
 And turn th'unwilling steeds another way:  
 Benighted wanderers, the forest o'er,  
 Curs'd the sav'd candle, and unop'ning door;  
 While the gaunt mastiff growling at the gate, 195  
 Affrights the beggar whom he longs to eat.

Not so his Son, he mark'd this oversight,  
 And then mistook reverse of wrong for right.  
 (For what to shun will no great knowledge need'

## NOTES.

VER. 199. (*For what to shun will no great knowledge need, But what to follow, is a task indeed.*) The poet is here speaking only of the knowledge gained by experience. Now there are so many miserable examples of ill conduct, that no one, with his eyes open, can be at a loss to know *what to shun*; but, very inviting examples, of a good conduct are extremely rare: Besi-

## IMITATIONS.

VER. 182. *With soups unbought,*)

— dapibus mensas onerabat inemptis. Virg. P.

But what to follow, is a task indeed.) 200  
 Yet sure, of qualities deserving praise,  
 More go to ruin Fortunes, than to raise.  
 What slaughter'd hecatombs, what floods of wine,  
 Fill the capacious 'Squire, and deep Divine!  
 Yet no mean motive this profusion draws, 205  
 His oxen perish in his country's cause;  
 'Tis GEORGE and LIBERTY that crowns the cup,  
 And Zeal for that great House which eats him up.  
 The Woods recede around the naked seat,  
 The sylvans groan --- no matter --- for the Fleet; 210  
 Next goes his Wool --- to clothe our valiant bands,  
 Last, for his Country's love, he sells his Lands.  
 To town he comes, completes the nation's hope,

#### VARIATIONS.

VER. 200. Here I found two lines in the Poet's MS.

„Yet sure, of qualities deserving praise,

„More go to ruin fortunes than to raise.

which, as they seemed to be necessary to do justice to the general Character going to be described, I advised him to insert in their place.

#### NOTES.

des, the mischiefs of folly are eminent and obvious; but the fruits of prudence, remote and retired from common observation; had it seen at all, yet their dependance on their causes being direct and immediate, they are not easily understood.

VER. 201, 202. *Yet sure, of qualities deserving praise, More go to ruin fortunes than to raise.* This, tho' a certain truth, will, as I apprehend, never make its fortune in the City: yet, for all that; the poet has fully approved his maxim by the example of a character truly amiable for its beneficence, tho' carried to an extreme.

And heads the bold Train-bands, and burns a Pope.  
 And shall not Britain now reward his toils, 215  
 Britain, that pays her Patriots with her Spoils?  
 In vain at Court the Bankrupt pleads his cause,  
 His thankless Country leaves him to her Laws.

The Sense to value Riches, with the Art  
 T'enjoy them, and the Virtue to impart, 220

## VARIATIONS.

After v. 218. in the MS.

Where one lean herring furnish'd Cotta's board,  
 And nettles grew, fit porridge for their Lord;  
 Where mad good-nature, bounty misapply'd,  
 In lavish Curio blaz'd a while and dy'd;  
 There Providence once more shall shift the scene,  
 And shewing H—Y, teach the golden mean.

## COMMENTARY.

VER. 219. *The Sense to value Riches, &c.*) Having now largely expos'd the ABUSE of Riches by example, not only the *Plan*, but the *Philosophy* of his *Poem*, required, that he should in the way, shew the USE likewise: He therefore (from v. 218 to 249.) calls for an EXAMPLE, in which may be found, against the *Prodigal*, the *Sense to value Riches*; against the *Vain*; the *Art to enjoy them*; and against the *Avaricious*, the *Virtue to impart them*; when acquired. This whole Art (he tells us) may comprized in one great and general precept, which is this. „That „the rich man should consider himself as the substitute of Providence „in this unequal distribution of things; as the person who is

To ease, or emulate, the care of Heav'n,  
 „To mend the faults of fortune, or to justify her graces.“ And thus the poet slides naturally into the prosecution of his subject in an *Example* of the *true Use* of Riches.

## NOTES.

VER. 219, 220. *The Sense to value Riches, with the Art, T'enjoy them, and the Virtue to impart.*) *The Sense to value Riches*

Not meanly, nor ambitiously pursu'd,  
 Not sunk by sloth, nor rais'd by servitude;  
 To balance Fortune by a just expence,  
 Join with Oeconomy, Magnificence;  
 With Splendor, Charity; with Plenty, Health; 225  
 Oh teach us BATHURST! yet unspoil'd by wealth!  
 That secret rare, between th'extremes to move  
 Of mad Good-nature, and of mean Self love.

B. To Worth or Want well-weigh'd, be Bounty giv'n,  
 And ease, or emulate, the care of Heav'n; 230  
 (Whose measure full o'erflows on human race.  
 Mend Fortune's fault, and justify her grace.

## VARIATIONS.

After v. 236. in the MS.

That secret rare, with affluence hardly join'd,  
 which W—n lost, yet B—y ne'er could find;  
 Still miss'd by Vice, and scarce by Virtue hit,  
 By G—'s goodness, or by S—'s wit.

## NOTES.

may be *enjoyed* without *Art*, and *imparted* with *Virtue*, so they may be *valued* without *Sense*. That man therefore only shews he has the *sense* to *value Riches*, who keeps what he has acquired, in order to enjoy one part of it innocently and elegantly, in such measure and degree as his station may justify, which the poet calls the *Art of enjoying*; and to impart the remainder amongst objects of worth, or *want well weigh'd*; which is, indeed, the *Virtue of imparting*.

VER. 231, 232. (*Whose measure full o'erflows on human race*) Mend Fortune's fault, and justify her grace.) i. e. Such of the Rich whose full measure overflows on human race, repair the wrongs of Fortune done to the indigent; and at the same time, justify the favours she had bestowed upon themselves.

Wealth in the gross is death, but life diffus'd;  
 As poison heals, in just proportion us'd;  
 In heaps, like Ambergrise, a stink it lies, 235  
 But well-dispers'd, is Incense to the Skies.

P. Who starves by Nobles, or With Nobles eats?  
 The Wretch that trusts them, and the Rogue that cheats.  
 Is there a Lord, who knows a cheerful noon  
 Without a Fiddler, Flatt'rer, or Buffoon? 240  
 Whose table, Wit, or modest Merit share,  
 Un-elbow'd by a Gamester, Pimp, or Play'r?  
 Who copies Your's, or OXFORD's better part,  
 To ease the oppress'd, and raise the sinking heart?  
 Where-e'er he shines, oh Fortune, gild the scene,  
 And Angels guard him in the golden Mean! 246  
 There, English Bounty yet a-while may stand,  
 And honour linger ere it leaves the land.

But all our praises why should Lords engross?  
 Rise, honest Muse! and sing the MAN of ROSS: 250

#### VARIATIONS.

After v. 250. in the MS.

Trace humble worth beyond Sabrina's shore,  
 Who sings not him, oh may he sing no more!

#### COMMENTARY.

VER. 249. *But all our praises why should Lords engross? Rise, honest Muse!*) This invidious expression of the poet's unwilling-

#### NOTES.

VER. 243. OXFORD'S *better part*.) Edward Harley, Earl of Oxford. The son of Robert, created Earl of Oxford, and Earl Mortimer by Queen Anne. This Nobleman died regretted by all men of letters, great numbers of whom had experienced his benefits. He left behind him one of the most noble Libraries in Europe. P.



Pleas'd Vaga echoes thro' her winding bounds,  
And rapid Severn hoarse applause resounds.  
Who hung with woods yon mountain's sultry brow?

## COMMENTARY.

ness that the Nobility should engross all his praises, is strongly ironical; their example having been given hitherto only to shew the *abuse* of Riches. But there is great justness of *Design* as well as agreeableness of *Manner* in the preference here given to the *Man of Ross*. The purpose of the poet is to shew, that an *immense* fortune is not wanted for all the good that Riches are capable of doing; he therefore chuses such an instance, as proves, that a man with five hundred pounds a year could become a blessing to a whole country; and, consequently, that the poet's precepts for the *true use of money*, are of more *general* service than a bad heart will give an indifferent head leave to conceive. This was a truth of the greatest importance to inculcate: He therefore (from v. 249 to 297.) exalts the character of a *very private* man, one Mr. J. Kyrle, of Herefordshire: And in ending his description, struck as it were with admiration at a sublimity of *his own creating*, and warmed with sentiments of a gratitude he had raised in himself in behalf of the public, the poet bursts out,

And what? no monument, inscription, stone?

His race, his form, his name almost unknown?

Then transported with indignation at a contrary object, he exclaims,

## NOTES.

VER. 250. *The MAN of ROSS*;) The person here celebrated, who with a small Estate actually performed all these good works, and whose true name was almost lost (partly by the title of the *Man of Ross* given him by way of eminence, and partly by being buried without so much as an inscription) was called Mr. John Kyrle. He died in the year 1724, aged 90, and lies interred in the chancel of the church of Ross in Herefordshire.

We must understand what is here said, of *actually performing*, to mean by the contributions which the *Man of Ross*, by his assiduity and interest, collected in his neighbourhood.

From the dry rock who bade the waters flow?  
 Not to the skies in useless columns tost, 255  
 Or in proud falls magnificently lost,  
 But clear and artless, pouring thro' the plain  
 Health to the sick, and solace to the swain.  
 Whose Cause-way parts the vale with shady rows?  
 Whose Seats the weary Traveller repose? 260  
 Who taught that heav'n-directed spire to rise?  
 „The MAN of ROSS,“ each lisping babe replies.  
 Behold the Marker-place with poor o'erspread!  
 The MAN of ROSS divides the weekly bread:  
 He feeds yon Alms-house, neat, but void of state,  
 Where Age and Want sit smiling at the gate: 266  
 Him portion'd maids, apprentic'd orphans blest,  
 The young who labour, and the old who rest.  
 Is any sick? the MAN of ROSS relieves,

## COMMENTARY.

When Hopkins dies, a thousand lights attend  
 The wretch, who living sav'd a candle's end:  
 Should'ring God's altar a vile image stands,  
 Belies his features, nay, extends his hands.

I take notice of this description of the portentous vanity of a miserable Extortioner, chiefly for the use we shall now see he makes of it in carrying on his subject.

## NOTES

VER. 255. *Not to the skies in useless columns tost, Or in proud falls magnificently lost.* The intimation, in the first line, well ridicules the madness of fashionable Magnificence; these columns aspiring to prop the skies, in a very different sense from the *heav'n-directed spire*, in the verse that follows: As the expression, in the second line; exposes the meanness of it, in *sinking proudly* to no purpose.

Ep. III. MORAL ESSAYS. 231

Prescribes, attends, the med'cine makes, and gives.  
Is there a variance; enter but his door, 271  
Balk'd are the Courts, and contest is no more.  
Despairing Quacks with curses fled the place,  
And vile Attorneys, now an useless race.

B. Thrice happy man! enabled to pursue 275  
What all so wish, but want the pow'r to do!  
Oh say, what sums that gen'rous hand supply?  
What mines to swell that boundless charity?

P. Of Debts, and Taxes, Wife and Children clear,  
This man posselt -- five hundred pounds a year, 280  
Blush, Grandeur, blush! proud Courts, withdraw  
your blaze!

Ye little Stars! hide your diminish'd rays.

B. And what? no monument, inscription, stone?  
His race, his form, his name almost unknown?

P. Who builds a Church to God, and not to Fame,  
Will never mark the marble with his Name: 286

NOTES.

VER. 275. *Thrice happy man! enabled to pursue, &c. — boundless charity?* These four lines (which the poet, with the highest propriety, puts into the mouth of his noble friend) very artfully introduce the two following, as by the equivocal expression they had raised our expectations to hear of millions, which prove, at last, to be only five hundred pounds a year. A circumstance, as we see in the Comment, of great importance to be inculcated.

VER. 281. *Blush, Grandeur, blush! proud Courts, withdraw your blaze! &c.* In this sublime apostrophe, they are not bid to blush because *outstript* in virtue, for no such contention is supposed: but for being *outshined* in their own proper pretensions to Splendor and Magnificence. SCRIBL.

Go, search it there, where to be born and die,  
 Of rich and poor makes all the history;  
 Enough, that Virtue fill'd the space between;  
 Prov'd, by the ends of being, to have been: 290  
 When Hopkins dies, a thousand lights attend  
 The wretch, who living sav'd a candle's end:  
 Should'ring God's altar a vile image stands,  
 Belies his features, nay extends his hands;  
 That live-long wig which Gorgon's self might own,  
 Eternal buckle takes in Parian stone. 296  
 Behold what blessings Wealth to life can lend!

## VARIATIONS.

VER. 287. thus in the MS.

The Register inrolls him with his Poor,  
 Tells he was born and dy'd, and tells no more.  
 Just as he ought, he fill'd the Space between;  
 Then stole to rest, unheeded and unseen.

## COMMENTARY.

VER. 297. *Behold what blessings Wealth to life can lend!*  
*Now see what comfort it affords our end.)*

## NOTES.

VER. 287. *Go, search it there.)* The parish-register.

VER. 293. *Should'ring God's altar a vile image stands, Belies his features, nay extends his hands;)* The description is inimitable. We see him *should'ring the altar* like one who impiously affected to draw off the reverence of God's worshippers, from the sacred table, upon himself; whose *Features* too the sculptor had belied by giving them the traces of humanity: And, what was still a more impudent flattery, had insinuated, by *extending his hands*, as if that humanity had been some time or other, put into act.

VER. 296. *Eternal buckle takes in Parian stone.)* The poet ridicules the wretched taste of carving large periwigs on busto's, of which there are several vile examples in the tombs at Westminster and elsewhere. P.

And see, what comfort it affords our end.  
 In the worst inn's worst room, with mat half-hung,  
 The floors of plaister, and the walls of dung, 300  
 On once a flock-bed, but repair'd with straw,  
 With tape-ty'd curtains, never meant to draw,  
 The George and Garter dangling from that bed  
 Where tawdry yellow strove with dirty red,

COMMENTARY.

In the *first* part of this Epistle the author had shewn, from *Reason*, that Riches abused afford no comfort either in *life* or *death*. In *this* part, where the same truth is taught by *examples*, he hgd, in the case of *Corra* and his son, shewn, that they afford no comfort in *life*: the other member of the division remained to be spoken to,

Now see what Comfort they afford our end.

And this he illustrates (from v. 298 to 339.) in describing the unhappy deaths of the last Villers, Duke of Buckingham, and Sir J. Cutler; whose profusion and avarice he has beautifully contrasted. The miserable end of these two extraordinary persons naturally leads the poet into this humane reflexion, however ludicrously expressed,

Say, for such worth, are other worlds prepar'd?

Or are they both, in this, their own reward?

And now, as if fully determined to resolve this doubtful question, he assumes the air and importance of a Professor ready address'd to plunge himself into the very depths of theology:

A knotty point! to which we now proceed —

When, on a sudden, the whole scene is changed,

But you are tir'd. — I'll tell a tale — Agreed.

And thus, by the most easy transition, we are come to the *concluding doctrine* of his poem.

NOTES.

VER. 305. *Great Villers lies* —) This Lord, yet more famous for his vices than his misfortunes, having been possessed of about



Great Villers lies --- alas! how chang'd from him,  
 That life of pleasure, and that soul of whim! 306  
 Gallant and gay, in Cliveden's proud alcove,  
 The bow'r of wanton Shrewsbury and love;  
 Or just as gay, at Council, in a ring  
 Of mimick'd Statesmen, and their merry King. 310  
 No Wit to flatter, left of all his store!  
 No Fool to laugh at, which he valu'd more.  
 There, Victor of his health, of fortune, friends,  
 And fame; this lord of useless thousands ends,  
 His Grace's fate sage Cutler could foresee, 315  
 And well (he thought) advis'd him, „Live like me.,  
 As well his Grace reply'd, „Like you, Sir John?  
 „That I can do, when all I have is gone.“

## NOTES.

50,000 *l.* a year, and passed through many of the highest posts in the kingdom, died in the year 1687, in a remote inn in Yorkshire, reduced to the utmost misery. P.

VER. 307. *Cliveden*) A delightful palace, on the banks of the Thames, built by the D. of Buckingham. P.

VER. 308. *Shrewsbury*) The Countess of Shrewsbury, a woman abandoned to gallantries, The Earl her husband was killed by the Duke of Buckingham in a duel; and it has been said, that during the combat she held the Duke's horses in the habit of a page. P.

VER. 312. *No Fool to laugh at, which he valued more.* That is, he liked disguised flattery better than the more direct and avowed. And no wonder a man of wit should have this taste. For the taking pleasure in fools, for the sake of laughing at them, is nothing else but the complaisance of flattery *ourselves*, by an advantageous comparison, which the mind makes between itself and the object laughed at. Hence too we may see the Reason of men's preferring *this* to other kinds of flattery. For we are always inclined to think that work best done which we do ourselves.

Resolve me, Reason, which of these is worse,  
 Want with a full, or with an empty purse? 320  
 Thy life more wretched, Cutler, was confess'd,  
 Arise, and tell me, was thy death more bless'd?  
 Cutler saw tenants break, and houses fall,  
 For very want; he could not build a wall.  
 His only daughter in a stranger's pow'r, 325  
 For very want; he could not pay a dow'r.  
 A few grey heirs his rev'rend temples crown'd,  
 'Twas very want that sold them for two pound.  
 What ev'n deny'd a cordial at his end,  
 Banish'd the doctor, and expell'd the friend? 330  
 What but a want, which you perhaps think mad,  
 Yet numbers feel, the want of what he had!

## NOTES.

VER. 319. *Resolve me, Reason, which of these is worse, Want with a full, or with an empty purse?*) The poet did well in appealing to Reason, from the parties concerned; who, it is likely, had made but a very sorry decision. The abhorrence of an empty purse would have certainly perverted the judgment of *Want with a full one*: And the longings for a full one would probably have as much misled *Want with an empty one*. Whereas Reason resolves this matter in a trice. There being a possibility that *Want with an empty purse* may be relieved; but none, that *Want with a full purse* ever can.

VER. 322. — *Cutler — Arise and tell me, &c.*) This is to be understood as a solemn evocation of the Shade of this illustrious knight, in the manner of the Ancients; who used to call up their departed Heroes by two things they principally loved and detested, as the most potent of all charms. Hence this Sage is conjured by the powerful mention of a *full*, and of an *empty purse*. SCRIBL.

Cutler and Brutus, dying both exclaim,  
„Virtue! and Wealth! what are ye but a name!“

Say, for such worth are other worlds prepar'd?  
Or are they both, in this their own reward? 336  
A knotty point! to which we now proceed.  
But you are tir'd --- I'll tell a tale --- B. Agreed.

P. Where London's column, pointing at the skies  
Like a tall bully, lifts the head, and lyes; 340

#### VARIATIONS.

VER. 337. in the former Editions,  
That knotty point, my Lord, shall I discuss,  
Or tell a tale? — A Tale. — It follows thus.

#### COMMENTARY.

VER. 339. *Where London's column, &c.*) For, the foregoing examples of *profusion* and *avarice* having been given to shew,

#### NOTES.

VER. 333. Cutler and Brutus, dying both exclaim, „Virtue! and wealth! what are ye but a name!“ There is a greater beauty in this comparison than the common reader is aware of. Brutus was, in *morals* at least, a *Stoic*, like his uncle. And how much addicted to that sect in general, appears from his professing himself of the old academy, and being a most passionate admirer of *Antiochus Ascalonites*, an essential *Stoic*, if ever there was any. Now *Stoical* virtue was, as our author truly tells us; not *exercise*, but *apathy* — *Contracted all, retiring to the breast*. In a word, like Sir J. Cutler's *purse*, nothing for use, but kept close shut, and center'd all within himself. — Now *virtue* and *wealth*, thus circumstanced, are indeed no other than mere names.

VER. 339. *Where London's column,*) The Monument, built in the memory of the fire of London, with an inscription, importing that city to have been burnt by the Papists,

VER. 340. *Like a tall bully, lifts the head, and lies,*) It were to be wished, the *City-monument* had been compared to something of more dignity: As, to the *Court-champion*; when, like him, it only spoke the *seefe* of the Government. SCRIBL.

There dwelt a Citizen of sober fame,  
A plain good man, and Balaam was his name;  
Religious, punctual, frugal, and so forth;

## COMMENTARY.

that misapplied wealth was *not enjoyed*; it only remained to prove that in such circumstances wealth became the *heaviest punishment*; and this was the very point to be concluded with, as the great MORAL of this instructive poem; which is to teach us, *how miserable men make themselves by not endeavouring to restrain the ruling Passion, tho' it be indeed implanted in the constitution of things*; while, at the same time, it is an answer to the latter part of the question,

Say, for such worth are other worlds prepar'd?

Or are they both, in this their own reward?

For the solution of which only, this example was jocularly pretended to have been given.

All this the poet has admirably supported, in the artful construction of his fable of Sir Balaam; whose character is so drawn, as to let the reader see he had it in his power to regulate the *ruling Passion* by reason, as having in himself the seeds of Integrity, Religion, and Sobriety. These are gradually worked out by an insatiable *thirst for Wealth*; and this again (thro' a false sense of his own abilities in acquiring it) succeeded by as immoderate a *Vanity*: Which will lead us to another beauty in the management of the Story. For, in order to see, in one concluding example, the miseries of exorbitant wealth ill employ'd; it was necessary to set before the Reader, at once, all the misuses, that flowed both from avarice and profusion. The vices of the *Citizen* and the *Noble*, therefore, which were separated and contrasted in the foregoing instances, are here shewn incorporated in a *Courtly Cit.* Perhaps it will be said, that the character has, by this means, the appearance of two *ruling passions*: but those studied in human nature know the contrary: and that *alieni appetens, sui profusus*, is frequently as much one as either the profuse or avaricious; apart. Indeed, this is so far from an inaccuracy, that it produces a new beauty. The *Ruling Passion* is of two kinds, the *simple* and the *complex*. The first sort the poet had given

His word would pass for more than he was worth.  
 One solid dish his week-dry meal affords, 345  
 An added pudding solemniz'd the Lord's:  
 Constant at Church, and Change; his gains were sure,  
 His givings rare, save farthings to the poor.

The Dev'l was piqu'd such saintship to behold,  
 And long'd to tempt him like good Job of old: 350  
 But Satan now is wiser than of yore,  
 And tempts by making rich, not making poor.

Rou'd by the Prince of Air, the whirlwinds sweep  
 The surge, and plunge his Father in the deep;  
 Then full against his Cornish lands they roar, 355  
 And two rich ship-wrecks bless the lucky shore.

## COMMENTARY.

examples of before. Nothing then remained to complete his philosophic plan, but concluding with the latter. Let me only observe further, that the author, in this *Tale*, has artfully summed up and recapitulated those three principal mischiefs in the *abuse* of money, which the *satirical* part of this poem throughout was employed to expose, namely AVARICE, PROFUSION, and PUBLIC CORRUPTION.

Constant at Church and 'Change; his gains were sure,  
 His givings rare, save farthings to the poor. —  
 Leaves the dull City and joins (to please the fair)  
 The well-bred Cuckolds in St. James's air —  
 In Britain's Senate he a seat obtains,  
 And one more Pensioner St. Stephen gains. —

## NOTES.

VER. 355. *Cornish*) The author has placed the scene of these shipwrecks in Cornwall, not only from their frequency on that coast, but from the inhumanity of the inhabitants to those to whom that misfortune arrives: When a ship happens to be



Sir Balaam now, he lives like other folks,  
 He takes his chirping pint, and cracks his jokes:  
 „Live like yourself,“ was soon my Lady's word;  
 And lo! two puddings smoak'd upon the board. 360

Asleep and naked as an Indian lay,  
 An honest factor stole a Gem away:  
 He pledg'd it to the knight; the knight had wit,  
 So kept the Di'mond, and the rogue was bit.  
 Some scruple rose, but thus he eas'd his thought,  
 „I'll now give six-pence where I gave a groat; 366  
 „Where once I went to church, I'll now go twice --  
 „And am so clear too of all other vice.“

The Tempter saw his time; the work he ply'd;  
 Stocks and Subscriptions pour on ev'ry side, 370  
 'Till all the Dæmon makes his full deicent  
 In one abundant show'r of Cent per Cent,

## NOTES

stranded there, they have been known to bore holes in it, to prevent its getting off: to plunder, and sometimes even to massacre the people: Nor has Parliament of England been yet able wholly to suppress these barbarities. P,

VER. 360. *And lo! &c.*) The poet had observed above, that when the luxuriously-selfish had got more than they knew how to use, they would try to do *more than live*; instead of imparting the least pittance of it to those whom fortune had reduced to do *less*: The VANITY of which chimerical project he well exposed in these lines:

What Riches give us let us then enquire.

Meat, Fire, and Cloaths. What more? Meat, Cloaths, and Fire.

But here, in one who had not yet learnt the art of disguising the Poverty of Wealth by the Refinements of Luxury, he shews, with admirable humour, the ridicule of that project:

And lo! ~~two~~ Puddings smoak'd upon the board.

Sinks deep within him, and possesses whole,  
Then dubs Director, and secures his soul.

Behold Sir Balaam, now a man of spirit, 375  
Ascribes his gettings to his parts and merit;  
What late he call'd a Blessing, now was Wit,  
And God's good Providence, a lucky Hir.  
Things change their titles, as our manners turn:  
His Compting-house employ'd the Sunday-morn:

## NOTES.

VER. 377. *What late he call'd a Blessing, now was Wit, &c.*

This is an admirable picture of human nature: In the entrance on life, all, but cockcombs born, are modest; and esteem the favours of their superiors to be marks of their benevolence: But, if these favours happen to increase; then, instead of advancing in gratitude to our benefactors, we only improve in the good opinion of ourselves; and the constant returns of such favours make us consider them no longer as accommodations to our wants, or the hire of our service, but debts due to our merit: Yet, at the same time, to do justice to our common nature, we should observe, that this does not proceed so often from downright vice as is imagined, but frequently from mere infirmity; of which, the reason is evident; for, having small knowledge, and yet an excessive opinion, of ourselves, we estimate our merit by the passions and caprice of others; and this perhaps would not be so much amiss, were we not apt to take their favours for a declaration of the sense of our merits. How often for instance, has it been seen, in the several learned Professions, that a Man, who, had he continued in his primeval meanness, would have circumscribed his knowledge within the modest limits of Socrates; yet, being *push'd up*, as the phrase is, has felt himself growing into a *Hooker*, a *Hales*, or a *Sydenham*; while, in the rapidity of his course, he imagined he saw, at every new station, a new door of science opening to him, without so much as staying for a Flatterer to let him in?

— Beatus enim iam

Cum pulchris tunicis sumet nova consilia.

Seldom at Church ('twas such a busy life) 381  
 But duly sent his family and wife.  
 There (so the Dev'l ordain'd) one Christmas-tide  
 My good old Lady catch'd a cold, and dy'd,  
 A Nymph of Quality admires our Knight; 385  
 He marries, bows at Court, and grows polite:  
 Leaves the dull Cits and joins (to please the fair)  
 The well-bred cuckolds in St. James's air:  
 First, for his Son a gay Commission buys,  
 Who drinks, whores, fights, and in a duel dies:  
 His daughter flaunts a Viscount's tawdry wife; 391  
 She bears a Coronet and P—x for life.  
 In Britain's Senate he a seat obtains,  
 And one more Pensioner St. Stephen gains.  
 My Lady falls to play; so bad her chance, 395  
 He must repair it; takes a bribe from France;  
 The House impeach him; Coningsby harangues;  
 The Court forsake him, and Sir Balaam hangs:  
 Wife, son, and daughter, Satan! are thy own,  
 His wealth, yet dearer, forfeit to the Crown: 400  
 The Devil and the King divide the prize,  
 And sad Sir Balaam curses God and dies.

## NOTES.

VER. 401. *The Devil and the King divide the Prize.*) This is to be understood in a very sober and decent sense; as a Satire only on such Ministers of State which History informs us have been found, who aided the Devil in his temptations, in order to

## IMITATIONS.

VER. 394. *And one more Pensioner St. Stephen gains.*)

— atque unum civem donare Sibylla ] U V.

## NOTES.

foment, if not to make, Plots for the sake of confiscations. So sure always, and iust is our author's satire, even in those places where he seems most to have indulged himself only in an elegant badinage. But this Satire on the *abuse* of the general Laws of forfeiture for high treason, which all well-policed communities have found expedient to provide themselves withal, is by no means to be understood as a reflexion on the Laws themselves, whose necessity, equity, and even lenity have been excellently well vindicated in that very learned and elegant Discourse, intitled *Some considerations on the Law of Forfeiture for high Treason*, Third Edition, London 1748.

VER. ult. — *curset God and dies.*) i. e. Fell under the temptation; alluding to the story Job referred to above.



5 NQ59





What brought S<sup>r</sup> Visto's ill-got Wealth to waste?  
 Some Dæmon whisper'd, Visto! have a Taste.  
*Ep. on Taste.*



## EPISTLE IV.

'TIS strange, their Miser, should his Cares employ  
 To gain those riches he can ne'er enjoy:  
 Is it less strange, the Prodigal should waste  
 His wealth, to purchase what he ne'er can taste?

## COMMENTARY.

EPISTLE IV.) The extremes of *Avarice* and *Profusion* being treated of in the foregoing Epistle; this takes up one particular branch of the latter, the *Vanity* of *Expense* in people of wealth and quality; and is therefore a corollary to the preceding, just as the Epistle on the *Characters of Women* is to that of the *knowledge and Characters of Men*. It is equally remarkable for exactness of method with the rest. But the nature of the subject, which is less philosophical, makes it capable of being analysed in a much narrower compass.

VER. I. 'Tis strange, &c. The poet's introduction (from v. I to 39.) consists of a very curious remark, arising from his intimate knowledge of nature; together with an *illustration* of that remark, taken from his observations on life. It is this, That the Prodigal no more enjoys his Profusion, than the Miser, his Rapacity. It was generally thought that *Avarice* only kept without enjoyment; but the poet here first acquaints us with a circumstance in human life much more to be lamented, viz. that *Profusion* too can communicate without it; whereas *Enjoyment* was thought to be as peculiarly the reward of the *beneficent* passions (of which this has the appearance) as *want* of enjoyment was the punishment of the *selfish*. The phenomenon observed is odd enough. But if we look more narrowly into this matter, we shall find, that Prodigality, when in pursuit of *Taste*, is only a *Mode of Vanity*, and consequently as selfish a passion as even avarice itself; and it is of the ordonnance and constitution of all selfish passions, when growing to excess, to defeat their own end, which is *Self-enjoyment*. But besides the accurate philosophy of this observation,

Not for himself he sees, or hears, or eats;  
 Artists must chuse his Pictures, Music, Meats:  
 He buys for Topham, Drawings and Designs,  
 For Pembroke Statues, dirty Gods, and Coins;  
 Rare monkish Manuscripts for Hearne alone,

COMMENTARY.

there is a fine *Morality* contained in it; namely, that *ill-got* Wealth is not only as *unreasonably*, but as *uncomfortably* squandered as it was raked together; which the poet himself further insinuates in v. 15.

What brought Sir Visto's *ill-got wealth* to waste?

— He then illustrates the above observation by divers examples in every branch of *wrong Taste*; and to set their absurdities in the strongest light, he, in conclusion, contrasts them with several instances of the *true*, in the Nobleman to whom the Epistle is addressed. This disposition is productive of various beauties; for, by this means, the *Introduction* becomes an *epitome* of the body of the Epistle; which as we shall see, consists of general reflections on *Taste*, and particular examples of *bad* and *good*. And his friend's Example concluding the Introduction, leads the poet gracefully into the subject itself; for the Lord, here celebrated for his good Taste, was now at hand to deliver the first and fundamental precept of it himself, which gives authority and dignity to all that follow.

NOTES.

VER. 7. *Topham*) A Gentleman famous for a judicious collection of Drawings. P.

VER. 8. *For Pembroke Statues, dirty Gods, and Coins.*) The author speaks here not as a Philosopher or Divine, but as a *Connoisseur* and Antiquary; consequently the *dirty* attribute here assigned these Gods of old renown, is not in disparagement of their worth, but in high commendation of their genuine pretensions. SCRIBL.



And Books for Mead, and Butterflies for Sloane. 10  
 Think we all these are for himself? no more  
 Than his fine Wife, alas! or finer Whore.

For what has Virro painted, built, and planted?  
 Only to shew, how many Tastes he wanted, 14  
 What brought Sir Visto's ill got wealth to waste?  
 Some Dæmon whisper'd, „Visto! have a Taste.,,  
 Heav'n visits with a Taste the wealthy fool,  
 And needs no Rod but Ripley with a Rule.  
 See! sportive fate, to punish aukward pride,

## NOTES.

VER. 10. *And Books for Mead, and Butterflies for Sloane.*) Two eminent Physicians; the one had an excellent Library, the other the finest collection in Europe of natural curiosities; both men of great learning and humanity. P.

VER. 12. *Than his fine Wife, alas! or finer Whore.*) By the Author's manner of putting together these two different Utensils of false Magnificence, it appears, that, properly speaking, neither the Wife nor the Whore is the real object of modern taste, but the Finery only: And whoever wears it; whether the Wife or the Whore, it matters not; any further than that the latter is thought to deserve it best, as appears from her having most of it; and so indeed becomes, by accident, the more fashionable Thing of the two. SCRIBL.

VER. 17. *Heav'n visits with a Taste the wealthy fool.*) The present rage of Taste, in this overflow of general Luxury, may be very properly represented by a desolating pestilence, alluded to in the word *vist*.

VER. 18. *Ripley*) This man was a carpenter, employed by a first Minister, who raised him to an Architect, without any genius in the art; and after some wretched proofs of his insufficiency in public Buildings, made him Comptroller of the Board of works. P.

VER. 19. *See! sportive fate, to punish aukward pride.*) Pride is one of the greatest mischiefs, as well as absurdities of our nature; and therefore, as appears both from profane and sacred



Bids Bubo build, and sends him such a Guide: 20  
A standing sermon, at each year's expence,  
That never Coxcomb reach'd Magnificence!

You show us, Rome was glorious, not profuse,  
And pompous buildings once were things of Use.  
Yet shall (my Lord) your just, your noble rules 25  
Fill half the land with Imitating-Fools;  
Who random drawings from your sheets shall take,  
And of one beauty many blunders make;  
Load some vain Church with old Theatric state,

# VARIATIONS.

After v. 22. in the MS.

Must Bishops, Lawyers, Statesman, have the skill  
To build, to plant, judge paintings, what you will?  
Then why not Kent as well our treaties draw,  
Bridgman explain the Gospel, Gibbs the Law?

# NOTES.

History, has ever been the more peculiar object of divine vengeance. But *awkward Pride* intimates such abilities in its owner, as eases us of the apprehension of much mischief from it; so that the poet supposes such a one secure from the serious resentment of Heaven, though it may permit *fate* or *fortune* to bring him into the public contempt and ridicule, which his native badness of heart so well deserves.

VER. 23. The Earl of Burlington was then publishing the Designs of Inigo Jones, and the Antiquities of Rome by Palladio. P.

VER. 28. *And of one beauty many blunders make;*) Because the road to *Taste*, like that to Truth, is but *one*; and those to Error and Absurdity a *thousand*.

VER. 29. *Load some vain Church with old Theatric state;*) In which there is a complication of absurdities, arising both from their different *natures* and *forms*; For the one being for *religious service*, and the other only for *civil amusement*, it is impossible

Turn Arcs of triumph to a Garden-gate; 33  
Reverse your Ornaments, and hang them all

## NOTES.

That the profuse and lascivious ornaments of the latter should become the modesty and sanctity of the other. Nor will any examples of this vanity of dress in the sacred buildings of antiquity justify this imitation; for those ornaments might be very suitable to a Temple of Bacchus, or Venus; which would ill become the sobriety and purity of the present Religion.

Besides, it should be considered, that the usual form of a Theatre would only permit the architectonic ornaments to be placed on the outward face; whereas those of a Church may be as commodiously, and are more properly put within; particularly in great and close pent-up Cities, where in the incessant driving of the smoke, in a little time corrodes and destroys all outward ornaments of this kind; especially if the members, as is the common taste, be small and little.

Our Gothic ancestors had juster and manlier notions than these modern mimics of Greek and Roman magnificence: which, because the thing does honour to their genius, I shall endeavour to explain. All our ancient churches are called, without distinction, *Gothic*; but erroneously. They are of two sorts; the one built in the Saxon times; the other during our Norman race of kings. Several Cathedral and Collegiate Churches of the first sort are yet remaining, either in whole or in part; of which this was the Original: When the Saxon kings became christian, their piety, (which was the piety of the times) consisted in building Churches at home, and performing pilgrimages to the Holy Land: and these spiritual exercises assisted and supported one another. For the most venerable as well as most elegant models of religious edifices were then in Palestine. From these our Saxon Builders took the whole of their ideas, as may be seen by comparing the drawings which travellers have given us of the churches yet standing in that country, with the Saxon remains of what we find at home; and particularly in that sameness of style in the later religious edifices of the Knights Templars professedly built upon the model of the church of the holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem with the earlier remains of our Saxon Edifices. Now the architecture of the Holy Land was entirely Grecian, but greatly fallen from its

On some patch'd dog-hole ek'd with ends of wall;  
Then clap four slices of Pilaster on't,

NOTES.

ancient elegance. Our Saxon performance was indeed a bad copy of it, and as much inferior to the works of St. Helene, as her's were to the Grecian models she had followed: Yet still the footsteps of ancient art appeared in the circular arches, the entire columns, the division of the entablature, into a sort of Architrave, Frize and Corniche, and a solidity equally diffused over the whole mass. This, by way of distinction, I would call the SAXON Architecture.

But our Norman works had a very different original. When the *Goths* had conquered Spain, and the genial warmth of the climate, and the religion of the old inhabitants, had ripened their wits, and inflamed their mistaken piety (both kept in exercise by the neighbourhood of the Saracens, thro' emulation of their science and aversion to their superstition,) they struck out a new species of Architecture unknown to Greece and Rome; upon original principles, and ideas much nobler than what had given birth even to classical magnificence. For having been accustomed, during the gloom of paganism, to worship the Deity in GROVES (a practice common to all nations) When their new Religion required covered edifices, they ingeniously projected to make them resemble *Groves*, as nearly as the distance of Architecture would permit; at once indulging their old prejudices, and providing for their present conveniencies, by a cool receptacle in a sultry climate. And with what art and success they executed the project appears from hence, That no attentive observer ever viewed a regular Avenue of well grown trees intermixing their branches over head, but it presently put him in mind of the long Visto thro' a Gothic Cathedral; or ever entered one of the larger and more elegant Edifices of this kind, but it represented to his imagination an Avenue of trees, And this alone is what can be truly called the GOTHIC style of Building.

Under this idea of so extraordinary a species of Architecture, all the irregular transgressions against art, all the monstrous offences against nature, disappear; every thing has its reason, every thing is in order, and an harmonious Whole arises from the studious application of means proper and proportioned to the end.

That, lac'd with bits of rustic, makes a Front.  
 Shall call the winds thro' long arcades to roar, 35

## NOTES.

For could the *Arches* be otherwise than *pointed* when the Workman was to imitate that curve which branches make by their intersection with one another? Or could the *Columns* be otherwise than split into distinct shafts, when they were to represent the Stems of a group of Trees? On the same principle was formed the spreading ramification of the stone-work in the windows, and the stained glass in the interstices; the one being to represent the branches, and the other the leaves of an opening Grove; and both concurring to preserve that gloomy light inspiring religious horror. Lastly, we see the reason of their studied aversion to *apparent* solidity in these stupendous masses, deemed so absurd by men accustomed to the *apparent* as well as *real* strength of Grecian Architecture. Had it been only a wanton exercise of the Artist's skill, to shew he could give real strength without the appearance of any, we might indeed admire his superior science, but we must needs condemn his ill judgment. But when one considers, that this surprizing lightness was necessary to complete the execution of his idea of a rural place of worship, one cannot sufficiently admire the ingenuity of the contrivance.

This too will account for the contrary qualities in what I call the *Saxon Architecture*. These artists copied, as has been said, from the churches in the holy Land, which were built on the models of Grecian architecture; but corrupted by prevailing barbarism; and still further depraved by a religious idea. The first places of Christian worship were Sepulchres and subterraneous caverns, from necessity, low and heavy. When Christianity became the Religion of the state and sumptuous Temples began to be erected, they yet, in regard to the first pious ages, preserved the massive Style: made still more venerable by the *Church of the hol. Sepulchre*: Where, this Style was, on a double account, followed and aggravated.

Such then was **GOTHIC ARCHITECTURE**. And it would be no discredit to the warmest admirers of *Jones* and *Palladio* to acknowledge it has its merit; They must at least confess it had a nobler birth, tho' an humbler fortune, than the **GREEK and ROMAN ARCHITECTURE**.

Proud to catch cold at a Venetian door;  
 Conscious they act a true Palladian part,  
 And if they starve, they starve by rules of art.

Oft have you hinted to your brother Peer,  
 A certain truth, which many buy too dear: 40  
 Something there is more needful than Expence,  
 And something previous ev'n to Taste — 'tis Sense:  
 Good Sense, which only is the gift of Heav'n,  
 And tho' no Science, fairly worth the seven:  
 A Light, which in yourself you must perceive; 45  
 Jones and Le Nôtre have it not to give

To build, to plant, whatever you intend,  
 To rear the Column, or the Arch to bend,  
 To swell the Terras, or to sink the Grot;

COMMENTARY.

VER. 39. *Oft have you hinted to your brother Peer,  
 A certain truth, —*)

and in this artful manner begins the body of the Epistle.

NOTES.

VER. 30. *Turns Arches of triumph to a Garden-gate;*) This absurdity seems to have arisen from an injudicious imitation of these Builders might have heard of, at the entrance of the ancient Gardens of Rome: But they don't consider, that those were public Gardens, given to the people by some great man after a triumph; to which, therefore, Arches of this kind were very suitable ornaments,

VER. 36. *Proud to catch cold at a Venetian-door;*) In the foregoing instances, the poet exposes the absurd imitation of foreign and discordant Manners in public buildings; here he turns to the still greater absurdity of taking their models from a discordant Climate, in their private: which folly, he supposes, may be more easily redressed, as men will be sooner brought to feel for themselves than to see for the public.

VER. 46. *Inigo Jones* the celebrated Architect, and *M. Le Nôtre*, the designer of the best Gardens of France. P.



In all, let nature never be forgot.  
But treat the Goddess like a modest fair,

50

## COMMENTARY.

## I.

The first part of it (from v. 39 to 99.) delivers rules for attaining to the MAGNIFICENT in just expence; which is the same in Building and Planting, that the SUBLIME is in Painting and Poetry; and, consequently, the qualities necessary for the attainment of both must have the same relation.

1. The first *fundamental*, he shews (from v. 38 to 47.) to be SENSE:

*Good Sense*, which only is the gift of Heav'n,  
And, tho' no Science, fairly worth the seven.

And for *that* reason; not only as it is the foundation and parent of them all, and the constant regulator and director of their operations, or, as the poet better expresses it, — *of every art the soul*; but likewise as it alone can, in case of need, very often supply the offices of every one of them.

VER. 47. *To build to plans, &c.* 2. The next quality, for dignity and use, is TASTE, and but the next: For, as the poet truly observes, there is — *something previous ev'n to Taste* — *'tis Sense*; and this in the order of things: For *Sense* is a taste and true conception of *Nature*; and *Taste* is a sense or true conception of *beautiful Nature*; but we must first know the *Essences* of things, before we can judge truly of their *Qualities*. The business of *Taste*, therefore, in the pursuit of *Magnificence*, is, as the poet shews us (from v. 46 to 65.) 1. (to v. 51.) To catch or lay hold on *Nature*, where she appears most in her charms. 2. (to v. 57.) To adorn her, when taken, as best suits her dignity and quality; that is, to dress her in the light and modest habit of a virgin, not load her with the gaudy ornaments of a prostitute. This rule observed, will prevent a transgression in the following, which is, not to let all its beauties be seen at once, but in succession; for that advantage is inseparable from a graceful and well-dressed person. 3. (to v. 65.) To take care that the ornaments be well suited to *that part*, which it is your purpose to adorn; and, as in dressing out a *modest Fair* (which is the poet's own comparison) the colours are proportioned to her complexion; the stuff, to the enbonpoint of her person; and

Nor over-dress, nor leave her wholly bare;  
 Let not each beauty ev'ry where be spy'd,  
 Where half the skill is decently to hide.  
 He gains all points, who pleasingly confounds, 55  
 Surprizes; varies and conceals the Bounds;  
 Consult the Genius of the Place in all;  
 That tells the Waters or to/rise, or fall;

COMMENTARY.

the fashion, to her air and shape; so in ornamenting a villa, *the rise or fall of waters* should correspond to its acclivities or declivities; the *artificial hills or vales* to its cover or exposure; and the manner of *calling in the country*, to the disposition of its aspect. But again, as in the illustration, whatever be the variety in colour, stuff, or fashion, they must still be so suited with respect to one another, as to produce an agreement and harmony in their assemblage; so woods, waters, mountains, vales, and vistas must, amidst all their diversity, be so disposed with a relation to each other, as to create a perfect symmetry resulting from the whole; and this, the *Genius* of the place, when religiously consulted, will never fail to inform us of; who, as the poet says,

Now breaks, and now directs, th' intending lines,  
 Paints as you plant, and, as you work, designs.  
 And this is a full and complete description of the *office of Taste*.

NOTES.

VER. 53. *Let not each beauty ev'ry where be spy'd.* For when the same beauty obtrudes itself upon you over and over; when it meets you full at whatever place you stop, or to whatever point you turn, then Nature loses her proper charms of a *modest fair*; and you begin to hate and nauseate her as a prostitute.

VER. 54. *Where half the skill is decently to hide* If the poet was right in comparing the true dress of *Nature* to that of a *modest fair*, it is a plain consequence, that one half of the designer's art must be, *decently to hide*; as the other half is *gracefully to discover*.

VER. 57. *Consult the Genius of the Place, &c.* — to design, v. 64.) The personalizing or rather deifying the *Genius of the place*,

Or helps th' ambitious Hill the heav'ns to scale,  
 Or scoops in circling theatres the Vale; 60  
 Calls in the Country, catches op'ning glades,  
 Joins willing woods, and varies shades from shades;  
 Now breaks, or now directs, th' intending Lines;  
 Paints as you plant, and, as you work, designs.

Still 'follow Sense, of ev'ry Art the Soul, 65  
 Parts answ'ring parts shall slide into a whole,

## COMMENTARY.

VER. 65. *Still follow Sense, &c.*) But now when *Good Sense* has led us up to *Taste*, our fondness for the elegancies of our

## NOTES

In order to be consulted as an *Oracle*, has produced one of the noblest and most sublime descriptions of *Design*, that poetry could express. Where this *Genius*, while presiding over the work, is represented by little and little, as advancing from a simple adviser, to a creator of all the beauties of improved Nature, in a variety of bold metaphors and allusions, all rising one above another, till they complete the unity of the general idea.

First the *Genius* of the place *tells the waters*, or only simply gives directions: Then he *helps th' ambitious hill*, or is a fellow-labourer: Then again he *scoops the circling Theatre*, or works alone, or in chief. Afterwards, rising fast in our idea of dignity, he *calls in the country*, alluding to the orders of princes in their progress, when accustomed to display all their state and magnificence: His character then grows sacred, he *joins willing woods*, a metaphor taken from one of the offices of the priesthood; till at length, he becomes a Divinity, and creates and presides over the whole:

Now breaks, or now directs th' intending lines,

Paints as you plant, and, as you work, design's.

Much in the same manner as the *plastic Nature* is supposed to do, in the work of human generation,

VER. 65. *Still follow Sense, &c.*) The not observing this rule, bewilder'd a late noble writer (distinguished for his *philosophy of Taste*) in the pursuit of the Grand and Magnificent in moral

Spontaneous beauties all around advance,  
Start ev'n from Difficulty, strike from Chance;

## COMMENTARY.

new mistress, oftentimes occasions us to neglect the plainness and simplicity of the old; we are but too apt to forsake our Guide, and to give ourselves up solely to *Taste*. Our author's next rule therefore 3. is, *Still to follow Sense*, and let it perpetually accompany us thro' all the works of *Taste*.

Still follow Sense, of ev'ry art the Soul.

That is, *Good Sense* should never be a moment absent from the works of *Taste*, any more than the Soul from the Body; for just as the Soul animates and informs ev'ry air and feature of a beautiful body, so *Sense* gives life and vigour to all the productions of *Taste*.

VER. 66. *Parts answering parts, &c.*) The particular advantages of the union of Sense with Taste he then explains (from this verse to 71.) 1. That the beautiful parts which *Taste* has laid out and contrived, *Sense* makes to answer one another, and to slide naturally, without violence, into a whole. 2. That many beauties will spontaneously offer themselves, suggested from the very

## NOTES.

life; who, when *Good Sense* had let him up to the τὸ καλὸν καὶ τὸ πρέπον, of ancient renown, discharged his Guide; and, captivated with the delights of *Taste*, resolved all into the elegancies of that idea: And now, Reason, Morality, Religion, and the truth of things, were nothing else but TASTE; which, (that he might not be thought altogether to have deserted his sage conductress) he sometimes dignified with the name of the moral sense: And he succeeded in the pursuit of Truth, accordingly.

VER. 66. *Parts answering parts shall slide into a whole,* i. e. shall not be forced, but go of themselves; as if both the parts and whole were not of *ours*, but of *Nature's* making. The metaphor is taken from a piece of mechanism finished by some great master, where all the parts are so previously fitted, as to be easily put together by any ordinary workman: and each part slides into its place, as it were thro' a groove ready made for that purpose.



Nature shall join you; Time shall make it grow  
 A Work to wonder at — perhaps a *Stow*, 70  
 Without it, proud Versailles! thy glory falls;  
 And Nero's Terraces desert their walls:

## COMMENTARY.

necessity which *Sense* lays upon us, of conforming the parts to the whole, that no original invention of *Taste* would have supplied. A third advantage is, that you are then always sure to have *Nature on your side*.

Nature shall join you —

The expression is important. when we are bid to *begin with Sense* we were shewn how this would lead us to *Taste*, in the pursuit of *Nature*: but now that he bids us to go on with *Sense*, or *still to follow it*, after having arrived at *Taste*, he tells us, that *Nature* will then join us of her own accord: This has a great beauty, which arises from the Philosophic Truth of the observation. For, as we observed before, — *Sense* being a right conception of *Nature*; and *Taste* a right conception of beautiful *Nature*; when these are in conjunction, *Nature* can stand out no longer, but presents herself to you without further pains or search.

VER. 71. *Without it, proud Versailles! &c.* To illustrate this doctrine, the poet next shews us (from v. 70 to 99.) that with-

## NOTES.

VER. 70. The seat and gardens of the Lord Viscount Cobham in Buckinghamshire. P.

VER. 72. *And Nero's Terraces desert their walls:*) The expression is very significant. Had the *Walls* been said to *desert* the *Terraces*, this would have given us the image of a destruction, effected by time only; which had been foreign to the poet's intention; who is here speaking of the punishment of *unsupported Taste*, in the designed subversion of it, either by *good* or *bad*, as it happens; one of which is sure to do its business, and that soon; therefore it is with great propriety, he says, that the *Terraces desert their walls*, which implies purpose and violence in their subversion.



The vast Parterres a thousand hands shall make,  
 Lo! COBHAM comes, and floats them with a Lake:  
 Or cut wide views thro' Mountains to the Plain, 75  
 You'll wish your hill or shelter'd seat again.

## COMMENTARY.

out this continued support of *Good Sense*, things even of the highest *Taste* and utmost *Magnificence*, such as the Buildings of *Versailles*, the Gardens of *Villaro*, and the Groves of *Sabinus* (which are the instances he gives) all, in a very little time, come to nothing, and no wonder. For the exercise of *Taste* WITHOUT SENSE is, where something that is *not beautiful Nature* is mistaken for it; and *ornamented* as beautiful Nature should be: These ornaments, therefore, being destitute of all real support, must be continually subject to change. Sometimes the owner himself will grow weary of them (as in the case of *Villaro*) and find at last, that *Nature* is to be preferred before them,

Tir'd of the scene *Parterres* and *Fountains* yield,  
 He finds at last he better likes a *Field*.

Sometime, again, the Heir (like *Sabinus's*) will be changing a bad *Taste* for a worse,

One boundless green, or flourish'd carpet views,  
 With all the mournful family of Yews.

So that mere *Taste* standing exposed between the true and false, like the decent man, between the rigidly virtuous, and thoroughly profligate, hated and despised by both, can never long support itself; and with this the first part of the Epistle concludes.

## NOTES

VER. 74. Lo! COBHAM comes, and floats them with a Lake:) An high compliment to the noble person on whom it is bestowed, as making him the *Substitute* of *Good Sense*. — This office, in the original plan of the poem, was given to another Man of TASTE; who not having the SENSE to see a compliment was intended him, convinced the poet it did not belong to him.

VER. 75, 76. Or cut wide views thro' Mountains to the Plain, You'll wish your hill or shelter'd seat again.) This was done in

Ev'n in an ornament its place remark,  
Nor in an Hermitage set Dr. Clarke.

Behold Villario's ten-years toil compleat;  
His Quincunx darkens, his Espaliers meet; 80  
The Wood supports the Plain, the parts unite,  
And strength of Shade contends with strength of Light;

## NOTES.

Hertfordshire, by a wealthy citizen, at the expence of above 5000*l.* by which means (merely to overlook a dead plain) he let in the north-wind upon his house and parterre, which were before adorned and defended by beautiful woods. — P.

VER. 78. — *set Dr. Clarke.*) Dr. S. Clarke's busto placed by the Queen in the Hermitage, while the Dr. duely frequented the Court. P. But he should have added — with the innocence and disinterestedness of an Hermit.

VER. 81, 82. *The Wood supports the Plain, the parts unite, And strength of Shade contends with strength of Light.*) The imagery is here taken from *Painting* in the judicious execution of the *Pencil*, and in the happy improvement of it by *time*. To understand what is meant by *supporting*, (which is a term of art common both to *Planting* and *Painting*) we must consider what things make the natural defect or weakness of a rude uncultivated *Plain*; and these are, the having and disagreeable *plainness*, and the not having a *proper termination*. But a *Wood*, rightly disposed, takes away the one, and gives what is wanting of the other.

— The parts unite.

The utmost which art can do, when it does its full office, is to give the work a *consent* of parts; but it is *time* only that can make the *union* here spoken of. So in painting, the skill of the *master* can go no further, in the chromatic part, than to set those colours together, which have a natural friendship and sympathy for each other: But nothing but *time* can unite and incorporate their tints:

And strength of Shade contends with strength of Light,  
And now the work becomes a very picture; which the poet informs us of, in the sublime way of poetical instruction, by setting that picture before our eyes; and not merely a picture, but a

A waving Glow the bloomy beds display,  
 Blushing in bright diversities of day,  
 With silver-quiv'ring rills mæander'd o'er — 85  
 Enjoy them, you! Villario, can no more;  
 Tir'd of the scene Parterres and Fountains yield,  
 He finds at last he better likes a Field.

Thro' his young Woods how pleas'd Sabinus stray'd,  
 Or sat delighted in the thick'ning shade, 90  
 With annual joy the red'ning shoots to greet,  
 Or see the stretching branches long to meet!  
 His Son's fine Taste an op'ner Vista loves,  
 Foe to the Dryads of his Father's groves;

## NOTES.

*perfect picture, in which the lights and shades, not only bear a proportion to one another in their force (which is implied in the word contends) but are both at their height, (which the word strength signifies.)* As the use of the singular number in the terms *Shade* and *Light*, alludes to another precept of the art, that not only the shades and lights should be great and broad, but that the masses of the clair-obscuré, in a groupe of objects, should be so managed, by a subordination of the groups to the unity of design, as that the whole together may afford one great shade and light.

VER. 84. *Blushing in bright diversities of day.* i. e. The several colours of the grove in bloom, give several different tints to the lights and shades.

VER. 94. *Foe to the Dryads of his Father's groves;*) Finely intimating, by this sublime classical image, that the Father's taste was *enthusiastical*: in which passion there is always something great and noble; tho' it be too apt, in its flights, to leave *sense* behind it: and this was the good man's case. But his Son's was a poor despicable *superstition*, a low scombrous passion, whose perversity of Taste could only gratify itself

With all the mournful family of Yews.

One boundless Green, or flourish'd Carpet views,  
 With all the mournful family of Yews; 96  
 The thriving plants, ignoble broomsticks made,  
 Now sweep those Alleys they were born to shade.

At Timon's Villa let us pass a day,  
 Where all cry out, „What fums are thrown away!

## COMMENTARY.

## II.

VER. 99. *At Timon's Villa, &c.*) As the first part ended with exposing the works of *Taste Without Sense*, the second begins with a description (from v. 98 to 173.) of *false Magnificence WITHOUT EITHER SENSE OR TASTE*, in the gardens, buildings, table furniture, library, and way of living of Lord *Timon*; who, in none of these, could distinguish between *greatness* and *vastness*, between *regularity* and *form*, between *dignity* and *state*, or between *learning* and *pedantry*. But what then? says the poet, here resuming the great principle of his *Philosophy* (which these moral Epistles were written to illustrate, and consequently on which they are all regulated) tho'

## NOTES

VER. 95. The two extremes in parterres, which are equally faulty; a *boundless Green*, large and naked as a field, or a *flourish'd Carpet*, where the greatness of the piece is lessened by being divided into too many parts, with scroll'd works and beds, of which the examples are frequent. P.

VER. 96. — *mournful family of Yews*;) Touches upon the ill taste of those who are so fond of Ever-greens (particularly Yews, which are the most tonsile) as to destroy the nobler Forest-trees, to make way for such little ornaments as Pyramids of dark-green continually repeated, not unlike a Funeral procession. P.

VER. 99. *At Timon's Villa*) This description is intended to comprize the principles of a false Taste of Magnificence, and to exemplify what was said before, that nothing but Good Sense can attain it. P.

Ep. IV. MORAL ESSAYS. 261

So proud, so grand; of that stupendous air, 101  
 Soft and Agreeable come never there.  
 Greatness, with Timon, dwells in such a draught  
 As brings all Brobdignag before your thought.  
 To compass this, his building is a Town, 105  
 His pond an Ocean, his parterre a Down:  
 Who but must laugh, the Master when he sees,  
 A puny insect, shiv'ring at a breeze!  
 Lo, what huge heaps of littleness around!  
 The whole, a labour'd Quarry above ground, 110  
 Two Cupids squirt before: a Lake behind  
 Improves the keenness of the Northern wind.  
 His Gardens next your admiration call,  
 On ev'ry side you look, behold the Wall!  
 No pleasing Intricacies intervene, 115  
 No artful wildness to perplex the scene;

COMMENTARY

Heav'n visits with a Taste the wealthy Fool,  
 And needs no Rod —

Yet the punishment is confined as it ought; and the evil is turned to the benefit of others: For

— hence the Poor are cloath'd, the Hungry fed;  
 Health to himself, and to his Infants bread,  
 The Lab'rer bears; what his *hard heart* denies,  
 His *charitable vanity* supplies.

NOTES.

VER. 104. — *all Brobdignag*) A region of giants, in the satires of *Gulliver*.

VER. 109. *Lo, what huge heaps of littleness around!*) Grandeur in building, as in the human frame, does not take its denomination from the *body*, but the *soul* of the work; when the soul therefore is lost or incumber'd in its envelope, the unanimated parts, now *huge* soever, are not members of grandeur, but mere *heaps of littleness*.



Grove nods at grove, each Alley as a brother,  
 And half the platform just reflects the other.  
 The suff'ring eye inverted Nature sees,  
 Trees cut to Statues, Statues thick as trees; 120  
 With here a Fountain, never to be play'd;  
 And there a Summer-house, that knows no shade;  
 Here Amphitrite sails thro' myrtle bow'rs;  
 There Gladiators fight, or die in flow'rs;  
 Un-water'd see the drooping sea-horse mourn, 125  
 And swallows roost in Nilus' dusty Urn.

My Lord advances with majestic mien,  
 Smit with the mighty pleasure, to be seen:  
 But soft — by regular approach — not yet —  
 First thro' the length of yon hot Terrace sweat; 130

## NOTES.

VER. 117, 118. *Grove nods at grove, each Alley has a brother, And half the platform just reflects the other.* This is exactly the *two puddings* of the citizen in the foregoing fable, only served up a little more magnificently: But both on the same absurd principle of wrong taste, viz. that one can never have too much of a good thing.

*Ibid. Grove nods at grove, &c.* The exquisite humour of this expression arises solely from its significancy. These *groves*, that have no meaning, but very near relation-ship, can express themselves only like twin-ideots by *nods*;

— nutant ad mutua Ralmæ  
 Fœdera —

as the Poet says, which just serves to let us understand, that they know one another, as having been nursed and brought up by one common parent.

VER. 124. The two Statues of the *Gladiator pugnas* and *Gladiator moriens*. P.

VER. 130. The *Approaches* and *Communication* of house with garden, or of one part with another, ill judged, and inconvenient. P.

Ep IV. MORAL ESSAYS: 263

And when up ten steep slopes you've drag'd your thighs,  
Just at his Study-door he'll bless your eyes.

His Study! with what Authors is it stor'd?  
In Books, not Authors, curious is my Lord;  
To all their dated backs he turns you round; 135  
These Aldus printed, those Du Sueil has bound.  
Lo some are Vellom, and the rest as good  
For all his Lordship knows, but they are Wood.  
For Locke or Milton 'tis in vain to look,  
These shelves admit not any modern book. 140

And now the Chapel's silver bell you hear,  
That summons you to all the Pride of Pray'r:  
Light quirks of Music, broken and uneven,  
Make the soul dance upon a Jig to Heav'n  
On painted Cielings you devoutly stare, 145

NOTES.

VER. 133. *His Study! &c.*) The false Taste in Books; a satire on the vanity in collecting them, more frequent in men of Fortune than the study to understand them. Many delight chiefly in the elegance of the print, or of the binding; some have carried it so far, as to cause the upper shelves to be filled with painted books of wood; others pique themselves so much upon books in a language they do not understand, as to exclude the most useful in one they do. P.

VER. 142. The false taste in *Muse*, improper to the subjects, as of light airs in churches, often practised by the organists, &c.

VER. 142. *That summons you to all the Pride of Pray'r:*) This absurdity is very happily expressed; *Pride*, of all human follies, being the first we should leave behind us when we approach the sacred altar. But he who could take Meanness for Magnificence might easily mistake *Humility* for *Meanness*.

VER. 145. — And in *Painting* (from which even Italy is not free) of naked figures in Churches, &c. which has obliged some Popes to put draperies on some of those of the best masters. P.

Where sprawl the Saints of Verrio or Laguerre,  
On gilded clouds in fair expansion lie,

## NOTES.

VER. 146. *Where sprawl the Saints of Verrio or Laguerre.*  
This was not only said to deride the indecency and awkward position of the figures, but to insinuate the want of dignity in the subjects. Raphael's pagans, as the devils in Milton, act a nobler part than the Gods and Saints of ordinary poets and painters. The cartons at Hampton-Court are talked of by every body; they have been copied, engraved, and criticised; and yet so little studied or considered, that in the noblest of them, of which more, too, has been said than of all the rest, we are as much strangers to St. Paul's audience in the Areopagus, as to those he preached before at Thessalonica or Berea.

The story from whence the painter took his subjects is this, — „St. Paul came to Athens, was encountered by the Epicureans „and Stoics, taken up by them to the court of Areopagus, before which he made his apology; and amongst his converts at „this time, were Dionysius the Areopagite, and a woman named Damaris. „On this simple plan he exercises his invention. Paul is placed on an eminence in the act of speaking, the audience round him in a circle; and a statue of Mars in the front of his temple denotes the scene of Action.

The first figure has been taken notice of for the force of its expression. We see all the marks of conviction, and resignation to the will of the divine Messenger. But I do not know, that it has been suspected, that a particular character was here represented. And yet the Platonic countenance, and the female attendant, shew plainly, that the painter designed DIONYSIUS, whom Ecclesiastical story makes of this sect, and to whom sacred history has given this companion. For the woman is DAMARIS mentioned, with him, in the *Acts*, as a joint convert. Either the Artist mistook his text, and supposed her converted with him at this audience; or, what is more likely, he purposely committed the indecorum of bringing a woman into the Areopagus, the better to mark out his *Dionysius*; a character of great fame in the Romish Church, from a voluminous mystic impostor who has assumed his titles. Next to this PLATONIST of open visage and extended arms, is a figure deeply collected within him-

And bring all Paradise before your eye.  
 To rest, the Cushion and soft Dean invite,  
 Who never mentions Hell to ears polite. 150

## NOTES.

self, immersed in thought, and ruminating on what he hears. Conformable to his state, his arms are buried in his garment, and his chin reposing on his bosom; in a word, all his lineaments denote the STOIC: the symbol of which sect was, *Ne te quæsieris exira*. Adjoining to him is an old man with a squalid beard and habit, leaning on his crouch, and turning his eyes upwards on the Apostle; but with a countenance so sour and canine, that one cannot hesitate a moment in pronouncing him a CYNIC. The next that follows, by his elegance of dress, and placid air of raillery and neglect, betrays the EPICUREAN: As the other which stands close by him, with his finger on his lips denoting silence, plainly marks out a follower of PYTHAGORAS. After these come a groupe of figures caviling in all the rage of disputation, and criticising the divine Speaker. These plainly design the ACADEMICS, the genius of whose school was to debate *de quolibet ente*, and never come to a determination. Without the Circle, and behind the principal figures, are a number of young faces to denote the scholars and disciples of the several sects. These are all before the apostle. Behind him are two other Figures: One regarding the Apostle's action, with his face turned upwards; in which the passions of malicious zeal and disappointed rage are so strongly marked that we needed not the red bonnet to see he was a Jewish Rabbi. The other is a pagan priest full of anxiety for the danger of the established Religion.

Thus has this great Master, in order to heighten the dignity of his subject, brought in the heads of every sect of philosophy and religion which were most averse to the principles, and most opposed to the success of the Gospel; so that one may truly esteem this carton as the greatest effort of his divine genius.

Ibid. *Verrio or Laguerre.*) Verrio (Antonio) painted many ceilings, &c. at Windsor, Hampton-Court, &c. and Laguerre at Blenheim-castle, and other Places. P.

VER. 150. *Who never mentions Hell to ears polite.*) This is a fact; a reverend Dean preaching at Court, threatened the sinner with punishment in „a place which he thought it not decent to name in so polite an assembly.,, P.



But hark! the chiming Clocks to dinner call;  
A hundred footsteps scrape the marble Hall:  
The rich Buffet well-colour'd Serpents grace,

#### • NOTES

VER. 153. Taxes in the incongruity of *Ornaments* (tho' sometimes practised by the ancients) where an open mouth ejects the water into a fountain, or where the shocking images of serpents, &c. are introduced in Grotto's or Buffets. P.

VER. 153. *The rich Buffet well colour'd Serpents grace,*) The circumstances of being *well-colour'd* shews this ornament not only to be very absurd, but very *odious* too; and has a peculiar beauty, as, in one instance of false Taste, viz. *an injudicious choice in imitation*, he gives (in the epithet employ'd) the suggestion of another, which is an *injudicious manner of it*. For those disagreeable objects which, when *painted*, give pleasure; if *coloured* after nature, in *relief*, become shocking, as a toad, or dead carcase in wax-work: yet these things are the delight of all people of bad Taste. However, the Ornament itself pretends to science, and would justify its use by antiquity, tho' it betrays the most miserable ignorance of it. The *Serpent* amongst the ancients, was sacred, and full of venerable mysteries. Now things do not excite ideas so much according to their own natural impressions, as by fictitious ones, arising from foreign and accidental combinations; consequently the view of this animal raised in *them* nothing of that abhorrence which it is wont to do in us; but, on the contrary, very agreeable sensations, correspondent to those foreign associations. Hence, and more especially, because the Serpent was the peculiar *Symbol of health*, it became an extreme proper ornament to the *genial rooms* of the ancients. In the mean time, we who are strangers to all this superstition, yet make ourselves liable to one much more absurd, which is, idolizing the very *fashions* that arose from it. But if these pretenders to Taste can so widely mistake, it is no wonder that those who pretend to none, I mean the verbal Critics, should a little *hallucinate* in this matter. I remember, when the short Latin inscription on Shakespear's monument was first set up, and in the very style of elegant and simple antiquity, the News-papers were full of these small critics; in which the only observation that looked like



And gaping Tritons spew to wash your face.  
 Is this a dinner? 'tis a Genial room? 155  
 No, 'tis a Temple, and a Hecatomb.  
 A solemn Sacrifice, perform'd in state,  
 You drink by measure, and to minutes ear.  
 So quick retires each flying course, you'd swear  
 Sancho's dread Doctor and his Wand were there.  
 Between each Act the trembling salvers ring, 161  
 From soup to sweet-wine, and God bless the King.  
 In plenty starving, tantaliz'd in state,  
 And complaisantly help'd to all I hate,  
 Treated, carels'd, and tir'd, I take my leave, 165  
 Sick of his civil Pride from Morn to Eve;  
 I curse such lavish cost, and little skill,  
 And swear no Day was ever past so ill.

## NOTES.

learning, was founded in this ignorance of Taste and Antiquity. One of these Critics objected to the word *Mors* (in the inscription) because the Roman writers of the purest times scrupled to employ it; but, in its stead, used an improper, that is, a figurative word, or otherwise a circumlocution. But had he considered that it was their Superstition of *lucky* and *unlucky words* which occasion'd this delicacy, he must have seen that a Christian writer, in a Christian inscription, acted with great judgment in avoiding so senseless an affectation of, what he miscalls, classical expression.

VER. 155. *Is this a dinner, &c.*) The proud Festivals of some men are here set forth to ridicule, where pride destroys the ease, and formal regularity all the pleasurable enjoyment of the entertainment. P.

VER. 156. — *a Hecatomb.*) Alluding to the *hundred footsteps* before.

VER. 160. *Sancho's dread Doctor*) See Don Quixote, chap. xlvii. P.

Yet hence the Poor are cloath'd, the Hungry fed;  
 Health to himself, and to his Infants bread 170  
 The Lab'rer bears: What his hard Heart denies,  
 His charitable Vanity supplies.

Another age shall see the golden Ear  
 Imbrown the Slope, and nod on the Parterre,

## COMMENTARY.

VER. 173. *Another age, &c.*) But now a difficulty sticks with me, (answers an objector) this load of evil still remains a monument of folly to future ages; an incumbrance to the plain on which it stands; and a nuisance to the neighbourhood round about, filling it

— with imitating fools.

For men are apt to take the example next at hand; and apert of all to take a bad one. No fear of that, replies the poet, (from v. 172 to 177.) Nothing absurd or wrong is exempt from the jurisdiction of Time, which is always sure to do full justice on it;

Another age shall see the golden Ear  
 Imbrown the Slope, and nod on the Parterre,  
 Deep Harvests bury all this pride has plann'd,  
 And laughing Ceres re-assume the land.

For the prerogative of

— Time shall make it grow,

is only due to the designs of *true Taste* joined to *Use*: And

'Tis *Use* alone that *sauvages* Expence;

## NOTES.

VER. 169. *Yet hence the Poor, &c.*) The Moral of the whole, where PROVIDENCE is justified in giving Wealth to those who squander it in this manner. A bad Taste employs more hands, and diffuses Expence more than a good one. This recurs to what is laid down in Book I. Ep. ii. v. 230--7, and in the Epistle preceding this, v. 161, &c. P.

VER. 173. *Another age, &c.*) Had the poet lived but three years longer, he had seen his general prophecy against all ill-judged magnificence fulfilled in a particular instance.

Deep Harveſts bury all his pride has plann'd, 175  
And laughing Ceres re-aſſume the land.

Who then ſhall grace, or who improve the Soil?  
Who plants like BATHURST, or who builds like  
BOYLE.

## COMMENTARY.

and nothing but the ſanctity of *that* can arreſt the juſtice of Time. And thus the ſecond part concludes; which conſiſting of an example of *false* Taſte in every attempt to Magnificence, is full of concealed precepts for the *true*: As the firſt part, which contains precepts for *true* Taſte, is full of examples of the *false*.

## III.

VER. 177. *Who then ſhall grace, &c.*) We come now to the third and laſt part, (from v. 176 to the end) and, as in the firſt, the poet had given examples of wrong judged *Magnificence*, in things of *Taſte without Senſe*; and, in the ſecond, an example of others *without either Senſe or Taſte*; ſo the third is employed in two examples of *Magnificence* in *Planting and Building*; where both *Senſe and Taſte* highly prevail: The one in him, to whom this Epistle is addreſſed: and the other, in the truly noble perſon whoſe amiable Character bore ſo conſpicuous a part in the foregoing.

Who then ſhall grace, or who improve the Soil

Who plants like BATHURST, or who builds like Boyle.

where; in the fine deſcription he gives of theſe two ſpecies of *Magnificence*, he artfully inſinuates, that tho', when executed in a *true Taſte*, the great end and aim of both be the ſame, viz.

## NOTES.

VER. 176. *And laughing Ceres re-aſſume the land.*) The great beauty of this line is an inſtance of the art peculiar to our poet; by which he has ſo diſpoſed a trite claſſical figure, as not only to make it do its vulgar office, of repreſenting a very *plentiful harveſt*, but alſo to aſſume the *Image of Nature*, re-eſta bliſhing herſelf in her rights, and *mocking* the vain efforts of *false magnificence*, which would keep her out of them.

'Tis Use alone that sanctifies Expence,  
 And splendor borrows all her rays from Sense. 180  
 His Father's Acres who enjoys in peace,  
 Or makes his Neighbours glad, if he increase:

## COMMENTARY.

the *general* good, in use or ornament; yet that their progress to this end is carried on in direct contrary courses; that, in *Planting*, the private advantage of the neighbourhood is first promoted, till, by time, it rises up to a public benefit:

Whose ample Lawns are not ashamed to feed  
 The milky heifer and deserving steed;  
 Whose rising Forests, not for pride or show,  
 But future Buildings, future Navies grow.

On the contrary, the wonders of Architecture ought first to be bestowed on the public:

Bid Harbors open, public Ways extend,  
 Bid Temples, worthier of the God, ascend;  
 Bid the broad Arch the dangerous flood contain,  
 The Mole projected break the roaring main.

And when the public has been properly accommodated and adorned, then, and not till then, the works of private *Magnificence* may take place. This was the order observ'd by those two great Empires, from whom we received all we have of this polite art: We do not read of any *Magnificence* in the private buildings of Greece or Rome, till the generosity of their public spirit had adorned the State with Temples, Emporiums, Councilhouses, Common-Porticos, Baths, and Theatres.

## NOTES.

VER. 179, 180. 'Tis Use alone that sanctifies Expence, And Splendor borrows all her rays from Sense.) Here the poet, to make the examples of good Taste the better understood, introduces them with a summary of his Precepts in these two sublime lines: for, the consulting Use is beginning with Sense; and the making Splendor or Taste borrow all its rays from thence, is going on with Sense, after she has led us up to Taste. The art of this can never be sufficiently admired, But the Expression is equal to the Thought.

Whose chearful Tenants blefs their yearly toil,  
 Yet to their Lord owe more than to the foil;  
 Whose ample Lawns are not afham'd to feed 185  
 The milky heifer and deferving fteed;  
 Whose rifing Forests, not for pride or fhew,  
 But future Buildings, future Navies, grow:  
 Let his plantations ftretch from down do down,  
 Firft fhade a Country, and then raife a Town. 190  
 You too proceed! make falling Arts your care,  
 Ereft new wonders, and the old repair;  
 Jones and Palladio to themfelves reftore,  
 And be white'er Vitruvius was before:  
 Till Kings call forth th' Ideas of your mind, 195  
 (Proud to accomplifh what fuch hands design'd,)  
 Bid Harbors open, public Ways extend,

NOTES.

This *fanctifying* of expence gives us the idea of fomething con-  
 fecrated and fet apart for fared ufes; and indeed, it is the idea  
 under which it may be properly confidered: For wealth employed  
 according to the *intention* of Providence, is its true confecration;  
 and the real ufes of humanity were certainly *firft* in its *intention*.

VER. 195, 197, &c.) 'Till Kings — Bid Harbors open, &c.)  
 The poet after having touched upon the proper objects of Magni-  
 ficence and Expence, in the private works of great men, comes  
 to thofe great and public works which become a prince. This  
 Poem was publifhed in the year 1732, when fome of the new-  
 built churches, by the Act of Queen Anne, were ready to fall,  
 being founded in boggy land (which is fatirically alluded to in  
 our author's imitation of Horace, Lib. ii. Sat. 2.

Shall half the new-built Churches round thee fall)  
 others were vilely executed, thro' fraudulent cabals between un-  
 dertakers, officers, &c. Dagenham-breach had done very great  
 mifchiefs; many of the Highways throughout England were hardly  
 paffable; and moft of thofe which were repaired by Turnpikes



Bid Temples, worthier of the God, ascend;  
Bid the broad Arch the dang'rous Flood contain,  
The Mole projected break the roaring Main; 200  
Back to his bounds their subject sea command,  
And roll obedient Rivers thro' the Land:  
These Honours, Peace to happy Britain brings,  
These are Imperial Works, and worthy Kings.

## NOTES.

were made jobs for private lucre, and infamously executed, even to the entrance of London itself: The proposal of Building a Bridge at Westminster had been petition'd against and refused; but in two years after the publication of this poem, an Act for building a Bridge pass'd thro' both houses. After many debates in the committee, the execution was left the carpenter above-mentioned, who would have made it a wooden one; to which our author alludes in these lines,

Who builds a Bridge that never drove a pile?

Should Ripley venture, all the world would smile.

See the notes on that place.

P.





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# MORAL ESSAYS.

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## EPISTLE V.

TO

Mr. ADDISON.

Occasion'd by his Dialogues on MEDALS.

SEE the wild Waste of all-devouring years!  
How Rome her own sad Sepulchre appears,  
With nodding arches, broken temples spread!  
The very Tombs now vanish'd like their dead!  
Imperial wonders rais'd on Nations spoil'd, 5

### NOTES.

THIS was originally written in the year 1715, when Mr. Addison intended to publish his book of Medals; it was sometime before he was Secretary of State; but not published till Mr. Tickell's Edition of his works; at which time the verses on Mr. Craggs, which conclude the poem, were added, viz. in 1720. P.

EPIST. V.) As the third Epistle treated of the extremes of *Avarice* and *Profusion*; and the fourth took up one particular branch of the latter, namely, the *vanity of expence* in people of wealth and quality, and was therefore a corollary to the third; so this treats of one circumstance of that Vanity, as it appears in the common collectors of old coins; and is, therefore, a corollary to the fourth.

Where mix'd with Slaves the groaning Martyr toil'd:  
 Huge Theatres, that now unpeopled Woods,  
 Now drain'd a distant country of her Floods:  
 Fanes, which admiring Gods with pride survey,  
 Statues of Men; scarce less alive than they! 10  
 Some felt the silent stroke of mould'ring age,  
 Some hostile fury, some religious rage.  
 Barbarian blindness, Christian zeal conspire,  
 And Papal piety, and Gothic fire,  
 Perhaps, by its own ruins sav'd from flame, 15  
 Some bury'd marble half preserves a name;  
 That Name the learn'd with fierce disputes pursue,  
 And give to Titus old Vespasian's due.

## NOTES.

VER. 6. *Where mix'd with slaves the groaning Martyr toil'd:*)  
 The inattentive reader might wonder how this circumstance came  
 to find a place here. But let him compare it with v. 13, 14,  
 and he will see the Reason,

*Barbarian blindness, Christian zeal conspire,  
 And Papal piety, and Gothic fire.*

For the *Slaves* mentioned in the 6th line were of the same na-  
 tion with the *Barbarians* in the 13th: and the *Christians* in the  
 13th, the Successors of the *Martyrs* in the 6th: Providence or-  
 daining, that *these* should ruin what *those* were so injuriously  
 employed in rearing: for the poet never loseth sight of his great  
 principle.

VER. 9. *Fanes, which admiring Gods with pride survey,)*  
 These Gods were the then Tyrants of Rome, to whom the Em-  
 pire rais'd Temples. The epithet; *admiring*, conveys a strong  
 ridicule; that passion, in the opinion of Philosophy, always con-  
 veying the ideas of ignorance and misery.

Nil admirari prope res est una, Numici,

Solaque quæ possit facere & servare beatum.

*Admiration* implying our ignorance of other things; *pride* our  
 ignorance of ourselves.

Ambition sigh'd: She found it vain to trust  
 The faithless Column and the crumbling bust: 20  
 Huge moles, whose shadow stretch'd from shore to shore,  
 Their ruins perish'd, and their place no more!  
 Convinc'd, she now contracts her vast design,  
 And all her Triumphs shrink into a Coin.  
 A narrow orb each crouded conquest keeps, 25  
 Beneath her Palm here sad Judæa weeps.  
 Now scantier limits the proud Arch confine,  
 And scarce are seen the prostrate Nile or Rhine;  
 A small Euphrates thro' the piece is roll'd,  
 And little Eagles wave their wings in gold. 30  
 The Medal, faithful to its charge of fame,  
 Thro' climes and ages bears each form and name:  
 In one short view subjected to our eye  
 Gods, Emp'rors, Heroes, Sages, Beauties, lie.  
 With sharpen'd sight pale Antiquaries pore, 35

## VARIATIONS.

VER. 35. With sharpen'd sight *pale Antiquaries pore,*) *Microscopic glasses,* invented by philosophers to discover the beauties in the minuter works of nature, ridiculously applied by Antiquaries, to detect the cheats of counterfeit medals.

## NOTES.

VER. 18. *And give to Titus old Vespasian's due.*) A fine insinuation of the entire want of Taste in Antiquaries; whose ignorance of Characters misleads them, (supported only by a name) against Reason and History.

VER. 25. *A narrow Orb each Crowded Conquest keeps,*) A ridicule on the pompous title of *Orbis Romanus*, which the Romans gave to their empire.

VER. 27. — *the proud Arch*) i. e. The triumphal Arch, which was generally an enormous mass of building.

Th' inscription value, but the rust adore.  
 This the blue varnish, that the green endears,  
 The sacred rust of twice ten hundred years!  
 To gain Pescennius one employs his Schemes,  
 One grasps a Cecrops in ecstatic dreams. 40  
 Poor Vadius, long with learned spleen devour'd,  
 Can taste no pleasure since his Shield was scour'd:  
 And Curio, restless by the Fair-one's side,  
 Sighs for an Otho, and neglects his bride.  
 Theirs is the Vanity, the Learning thine: 45  
 Touch'd by thy hand, again Rome's glories shine;  
 Her Gods, and god-like Heroes rise to view,  
 And all her faded garlands bloom a-new.  
 Nor blush, these studies thy regard engage;

## VARIATIONS.

VER. 37. *This the blue varnish, that the green endears,*  
 i. e. This a collector of silver; That, of brass coins.

VER. 41. *Poor Vadius,*) See his history, and that of his  
 Shield, in the *Memoirs of Scriblerus.*

## NOTES.

VER. 49. *Nor blush, these Studies thy regard engage;*) A  
 senseless affectation which some writers of eminence have betrayed;  
 who when fortune, or their talents have raised them to a con-  
 dition to do without those arts, for which only they gained our  
 esteem, have pretended to think letters below their Character.  
 This false shame M. Voltaire has very well, and with proper in-  
 dignation, exposed in his account of Mr. Congreve. „He had  
 „one Defect, which was, his entertaining too mean an Idea of  
 „his first Profession, (that of a Writer) tho' 'twas to this he ow'd  
 „his Fame and Fortune. He spoke of his Works as of Trifles  
 „that were beneath him; and hinted to me in our first Con-  
 „versation, that I should visit him upon no other foot than  
 „that of a Gentleman, who led a Life of plainness and simpli-



These pleas'd the Fathers of poetic rage; 50  
 The verse and sculpture bore an equal part.  
 And Art reflected images to Art.

Oh when shall Britain, conscious of her claim,  
 Stand emulous of Greek and Roman fame?  
 In living medals see her wars enroll'd, 55  
 And vanquish'd realms supply recording gold?  
 Here, rising bold, the Patriot's honest face;  
 There Warriors frowning in historic brass:  
 Then future ages with delight shall see  
 How Plato's, Bacon's, Newton's looks agree; 60  
 Or in fair series laurell'd Bards be shown,  
 A Virgil there, and here an Addison.  
 Then shall thy CRAGGS (and let me call him mine).  
 On the cast ore, another Pollio, shine;  
 With aspect open shall erect his head, 65  
 And round the orb in lasting notes be read,  
 „Statesman, yet friend to Truth! of soul sincere,

## NOTES.

„city. I answer'd, that, had he been so unfortunate as to be a  
 „mere Gentleman, I should never have come to see him: and I  
 „was very much disgusted at so unseasonable a piece of vanity.”  
*Letters concerning the English Nation*, xix.

VER. 53. *Oh when shall Britain, &c.*) A compliment to  
 one of Mr. Addison's papers in the *Spectator*, on this subject.

VER. 67. „*Statesman, yet friend to truth, &c.*) It should  
 be remembered that this Poem was written to be printed be-  
 fore Mr. Addison's *discourse on Medals*, in which there is the  
 following censure of long legends upon coins: „The first fault  
 „I find with a modern legend is its diffusiveness. You have  
 „sometimes the whole side of a medal ever-run with it. One  
 „would fancy the Author had a design of being Ciceronian —  
 „but it is not only the tediousness of these inscriptions that

„In action faithful, and in honour clear;  
 „Who broke no promise, serv'd no private end,  
 „Who gain'd no title, and who lost no friend; 70  
 „Ennobled by himself, by all approv'd,  
 „And prais'd, unenvy'd, by the Muse he lov'd.

## NOTES.

„I find fault with; supposing them of a moderate length, why  
 „must they be in verse? We should be surprized to see the  
 „title of a serious book in rhyme.“ — Dial. iii.

VER. ult. *And prais'd, unenvy'd, by the Muse he lov'd.*  
 It was not likely, that men acting in so different spheres as  
 were those of Mr. Craggs and Mr. Pope, should have their  
 friendship disturbed by Envy. We must suppose then that so-  
 me circumstances in the friendship of Mr. Pope and Mr. Ad-  
 dison are hinted at in this place.

F I N I S.



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